THE

FAITH

AND

PRACTICE

OF A

CHURCH

OF

England - *Man.*

The Fifth Edition.

LONDON:

Printed for *Walter Kettilby*, at the *Bishop*'s Head in St. *Paul*'s Church-Yard, 1700.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.

Of the Church, Page 1

CHAP. II.

Of Chriſtian Belief, 9

CHAP. III.

Of Goſpel Obedience, 18

CHAP. IV.

Of the Service of God in Publick, 27

CHAP. V.

Of Additions to the Faith, 44

CHAP. VI.

Of Civil Converſation, 53

CHAP. VII.

An earneſt Perſuaſive to continue in the Church of England, 69

THE

CONTENTS

CHAP. I.

Of the Church, Page 2

CHAP. II.

Of Christian Belief, 9

CHAP. III.

Of Gospel Obedience, 13

CHAP. IV.

Of the Service of God in Publick, 37

CHAP. V.

Of Additions to the Faith, 44

CHAP. VI.

Of Civil Conversation, 55

CHAP. VII.

An earnest Persuasive to continue in the Church of England, 69

CHAP. I.

Of the CHURCH.

SAint *PETER*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. Bids us, *to ſanctifie the Lord God in our hearts, and to be ready always to give an anſwer to every one that asketh us a reaſon of the hope that is in us, with meekneſs and fear.* And therefore it can never be improper, or unſeaſonable for the moſt private Man to give an account of Himſelf, of his Belief, and Practice, eſpecially in a time when Religion is ſo much controverted, that he may be corrected by others, if he be in any miſtake, (which I call God to witneſs, in my Caſe is not wilful) or if he be in the right, that he may at leaſt by this Example, do ſome good in the World, and provoke others to an Imitation.

I do therefore freely own, That I am not only a Chriſtian at large, who Believes Chriſt to be come, and the Goſpel to be the Word of God, and Rule of Men, and content myſelf with a ſilent Belief of This; but I look on myſelf as a Member of his Church, his Body, being Admitted into it by Baptiſm, and enjoying ſingular Priviledges and Advantages by it, as having a right to all the Benefits which he purchaſed to his Church, and a ſhare in all the Prayers that are made for it.

This Church, or generality of Chriſtians, hath ſeveral Parts, ſome of which are more pure, ſome more corrupt; yet all that hold the Eſſentials of Religion I eſteem to be of it. And tho' it be ſpread over the whole World, yet I look on it but as *One*, Chriſt himſelf ſpeaking of his Church but as *One*, and accordingly I profeſs it in my *Creed*. And I think it ought to be but *One*; for the ſeveral Parts of it ought not only to believe the ſame Articles of Faith, but as far as is poſſible to maintain the ſame Government, and keep up the ſame outward Order

and Administration of Affairs: That so whosoever sees them, may know them to be the same Kind of Men, tho' scatter'd into several Countries. And they ought to keep up Union, not only with one another, but especially with the first and purest Ages of Christianity. For the Unity of the Church seems to require that we should endeavour as much to keep up Unity with the first Christians, tho' we live so long after them in time, as if we had lived at the same time with them, but far distant from them as to place. And all the Members of the Catholick or Universal Church ought to be more *One*, to have a better agreement among themselves, a closer correspondence and connexion, and a greater concern one for another, than the *Mahometans* have one for another, who profess the same Religion; or than the Philosophers of the same Sect have, who hold the same Opinions.

And for my part I do what I can to keep up the Unity of it, by professing Christ openly with *this Church*, which is so pure a Part or Member of it.

And indeed, next to the sending of our Saviour into the World, I reckon myself bound for ever to thank God, that by his All-wise, and Over-ruling Providence, He was pleased to order me to be Born in *England*, and to be Baptized here, and Admitted into that Part of his Church which is here by Law Established, and which I do verily believe to be in all particulars, the Truest, and most Sincere Part of the Catholick Church on Earth.

Now by the Church of *England*, I understand that Body of Men, who, as to Church Affairs, are United together, under the same Principal Church-Officers, the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; and Communicate with them, and with one another, in all Religious Offices, according to the Liturgy, and Orders of our Church, profess the Christian Faith according to the Ancient Creeds, and the Thirty nine Articles, and are governed according to the Canons and Laws of this Church.

And this Church, thus Framed, and Governed, (as far as I can judge) I find to be very consonant to the Scriptures, and in all material Points to be exactly correspondent to the Primitive Church, in its greatest Purity, *viz.* under and presently after the Apostles.

For

For it hath not only a ſubordination of Officers, which is neceſſary in all Regular Governments whatſoever; But it hath the ſame Officers, Biſhops, and Prieſts, both in Name, and Authority, which ſeem ſpoken of in Scripture, which this Church always had, and all Churches that I can read of, ever had till of late, and the Church-Government that beſt agrees with a Monarchy in the State.

And whatever other Men do, I eſteem it not a light Matter, what Church-Government is among us, if it were only for this, That this Church-Government hath been ſo Univerſally received by all that owned themſelves Chriſtians, from all Antiquity; I may juſtly think there was ſome neceſſity of ſuch an Inſtitution at firſt, and fear varying from ſuch an Order, as not being able to diſcern perhaps all the ill Conſequences of altering it.

But I find alſo, That all other Nations, and particularly our own, were Converted under this Miniſtration. That this is the way by which ſo many good Men have gone to Heaven; the Principal of the Martyrs of the Ancient Church, as well as of our own, having been its Biſhops. And by the going but in the Way that ſo many good Men have gone, I may hope ſooner to meet Chriſt, than in a By-way of my own Invention.

And I find alſo this Church not only to be Governed by the ſame Governors, by which the Ancient Church was Governed, but alſo to have the ſame general Laws, and to execute the ſame kind of Orders (only where the Times will not give leave, or where there is a juſt Power in our Church to change, or good Reaſon to vary) and to be the ſame way conſiſtent with Monarchy, and ſubſervient to it, and to the Peace of the State by it. Beſides, that it is the beſt way, according to Human Prudence, to keep out Hereſie, or Schiſm, and preſerve Union between the Members of the ſame Profeſſion.

And Laſtly, I admire this Government and Inſtitution, becauſe under it I am in no doubt of the Validity of the Ordinations of our Miniſters, or of the Validity of the Sacraments by them Adminiſtred. For we have our Orders by a continued Succeſſion from the Ancients, and ſo

from the Apoſtles, which is the only ordinary way, that I know of, for a Man to be Commiſſionated to Act in Chriſt's Name.

And therefore, for one of our Nation, and Born within the Pale of our Church, to ſeparate himſelf from us, either from diſlike of Epiſcopacy, or on pretence of greater Purity, I muſt needs think to be a very dangerous Practice. For I no more doubt there is ſuch a Sin as *Schiſm*, than I doubt there is ſuch a Sin as *Murder*.

Further, I cannot but admire at the want of Underſtanding (to ſay no worſe) of thoſe Men who have endeavoured of late Years to run down Epiſcopacy in general, as Popiſh, ſeeing it is very evident, that Epiſcopacy was from the very beginning of *Chriſtianity*, and many Ages before Popery, as by it are meant the Errors of the Church of *Rome*. And if it muſt be called Popiſh, becauſe the Papiſts have ſuch as they call Biſhops; for the ſame Reaſon a Man may call the Creed Popiſh, becauſe the Papiſts uſe and profeſs it; And a Man may call all the *Greek* and other numerous *Eaſtern* Chriſtian Churches Popiſh, tho' in ſo many Points of Doctrine they are ſo contrary to the Church of *Rome*; But they agree with us in every conſiderable Point of Doctrine, as well as in Epiſcopal Government; and this by a continued Succeſſion from the firſt Ages, which is alſo another very ſtrong Argument on our ſide.

Indeed, it is ſo far from being true, that Epiſcopacy is a Branch, or a note of Popery, that I look on Epiſcopal Government, as the beſt way to keep out Popery, or any other Error. For Epiſcopacy, as Eſtabliſh'd in its juſt Rights and Power, utterly deſtroys the Papal Pretences; for this will bring the Biſhop of *Rome* to his former ſtate, when he was look'd on as no way differing from other Biſhops, but only as he was Biſhop of a bigger City, and had a larger Dioceſe. And the *Pope*'s Creatures were ſo aware of this, that in the Council of *Trent*, when the *Spaniſh* Biſhops would have Enacted Epiſcopacy to be of Divine Right, the *Italians*, the Pope's Creatures, preſently ſmelt out the Conſequences of it, *viz.* That, This would be to depreſs the *Pope* himſelf to the ſame Level

with

with other Biſhops, and therefore made all the Intereſt they could, That that Vote ſhould not paſs, and accordingly it was caſt out. And therefore, I muſt look on the *Pope* as a greater Enemy to Epiſcopacy, than even Preſbytery it ſelf. For Maſter *Calvin* himſelf did approve of Epiſcopacy; only it could not ſo well be brought into *Geneva*, where there was a Popiſh Biſhop living, who was Lord of that City. But the Pope will allow of no Biſhops, in proper ſpeaking, but only himſelf; all Biſhops deriving their Power from him, he being the Head, and Root of Epiſcopal Power, as *Cajetan* hath determin'd: And all Biſhops Acting only with his Leave, and by his Authority, and Grace, Swearing Obedience, and Homage to Him, as they do by the Oath which they muſt take when they are Conſecrated: All this makes them only the Pope's Servants, and ſcarcely ſo good as his Deputies: To be ſure, they are not properly Biſhops in the true, and ancient Senſe of it, as ſuch who, under Chriſt, had over their Presbyters, and People, Supreme Power, as to Church-Affairs, and Accountable only to Chriſt, and to a Council of their Fellow-Biſhops, often Meeting, and Conſulting together for the good of the whole.

And as Biſhops in general are not Popiſh, ſo neither can our Biſhops Appointed and Conſecrated according to the Orders of the Church of *England*, be with any colour accuſed of Popery. For at their Ordination firſt, and Conſecration afterwards, they all ſubſcribe to the *XXXIX. Articles*, to the uſe of the *Liturgy*, take the Oaths of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, and give all the caution and ſecurity, that one Man can give to another, of their Averſion to Popery, and ſteddineſs to the Church of *England*: And now beſides this, They take the *Teſt*, and Renounce *Tranſubſtantiation*, and the other great Points of Popery, and particularly diſclaim all ſubjection to the Pope, or dependance on him, and this with abundance of Truth and Reaſon.

For if Chriſtian Religion had been planted here from *Rome*, it doth not prove that we ought on that Account for ever to depend on *Rome*, or our Biſhops be ſubject to the Pope. For we can prove that *Scotland*, ſome

parts

parts of Germany, and other Places, received their Chriſtianity from *England*: And yet they will not allow us to challenge Power over thoſe Places upon that account ſtill in Spirituals. But it is evident, that we did not ſo much as receive our Religion from any of the Biſhops of *Rome*, but had it planted here, either by the Apoſtles, or Apoſtolical Men, as is fully made out, eſpecially of late by thoſe great and Learned Members of our Church, Arch-Biſhop *Uſher*, the Biſhop of St. *Aſaph*, and Dr. *Stillingfleet*, Dean of St. *Pauls*.

Indeed, when Chriſtianity was almoſt deſtroyed in the *Eaſtern* Parts of this Iſland by the *Saxons*, who were Heathens, the Biſhop of *Rome* ſent *Auguſtine* to Convert ſome of thoſe *Saxons*; but he found many Biſhops in this Country, who altogether diſowned any dependance on *Rome*, and would pay no Obedience to the Pope, profeſſing they owed no more ſervice to him, than to any other good Biſhop, and pious Chriſtian. And moreover, we in *England* may juſtly plead the Priviledge of the Kingdom of *Cyprus*, according to the Council of *Epheſus*, of being a diſtinct National Church, without Dependance on any other.

And as thus in Point of *Right* we can juſtifie our not being ſubject to *Rome*, ſo alſo in Point of *Fact*, we can ſay, the Pope never had any ſettled and quiet Poſſeſſion, and exerciſe of Power here, at leaſt for any conſiderable time together, as is at large evident from what Mr. *Prynn* and others have Collected; and all our Statutes of *Proviſor's*, and *Premunire's* do ſhew how little hold here the Pope was by our Government allow'd, or own'd to have. And tho' many did Appeal to *Rome*, it was againſt Law; and therefore, That gives the Pope no more Right here, than many Peoples being Traiterous, and paying Homage to an Uſurper, doth annul the Right and Title of the Lawful Prince.

If the Pope ever had any Power here, it could not be by a Divine, but a Human Conſtitution, by the Approbation of the King and Nation; and that very Power hath for good Reaſons annulled this Liberty, and revoked this Grant, and made it High Treaſon, or at leaſt a *Premunire*, to have any thing to do with the Pope or See of *Rome*.

and

and whatever Reaſons there ever could be for holding a friendly Correſpondence with the Biſhop of *Rome*, I am ſure there were and are as good, or greater Reaſons for denying it now, and forbidding all Appeals to *Rome*; not only by reaſon of the vaſt Sums of Money drawn out of the Nation (all great Eccleſiaſtical Cauſes being Judged at a Foreign Tribunal, and all Eccleſiaſtical Perſons made to depend on another Juriſdiction) but alſo we having found by woful experience how great an Enemy the Pope was to our Peace, all Tranſactions with him were and are by our Laws moſt juſtly forbidden.

And therefore we being thus a Legally Conſtituted National Church, had conſequently full Power to Reform ourſelves, without asking the Biſhop of *Rome*'s leave. (When we found many Errors by degrees crept in among us.) Nor can we with any ſhew of Reaſon, or Conſcience, be charged with Schiſm on that account; for we are ready to juſtifie to the World (as we have done it abundantly) that we have only caſt off Errors, or ſuch things as ought to be rejected, and have retained, or received, nothing but what is Neceſſary, or Lawful. And it is a hard caſe that we muſt be forced to ask the Pope's leave for us to grow better Chriſtians; and it is yet a harder caſe if he ſhould be unwilling, and not ſuffer us ſo to be.

And One particular National Church cannot, without great Impropriety, be ſo much as charged with Schiſm, from another National Church, ſuch as that at *Rome* is, but from the Univerſal Church.——So that it is a kind of Non-ſenſe for us, even to be charged with being Schiſmaticks from *Rome*, unleſs *Rome* be all the World, or a Particular be an Univerſal.

Ours is the National Religion; and for the firſt Ten Years of Queen *Elizabeth*, the Papiſts did Communicate with us till the Bull of Pope *Pius* IV. *Anno* $15\frac{69}{70}$ though our Reformation was then fully ſettled. So that *They* are bound to anſwer it, why they join not ſtill in Communion with us. And I hold myſelf bound to Obey this Church in all its Lawful Commands, it having as much Power, as any other Church in the World, over its own Members, though it is leſs Imperious in its Commands,

mands, and pretends not to a Dominion over our Faith.

And therefore moſt highly do I Honour and Revere This Church, thus Apoſtolically Govern'd, and Legally Eſtabliſh'd, and of all things in this World dread its Cenſures. For I cannot but reckon, That thoſe great Priviledges and Promiſes, granted by Chriſt to his Church, *Matt.* 18 muſt belong to This Church, which is ſo truly Chriſtian. And I am ſo far from ſlighting or deſpiſing its Authority, becauſe it doth not ſo imperiouſly Curſe its Enemies, or doth not pretend to inflict Temporal Puniſhments on Delinquents, that I revere it the more on this very account. For God will be nevertheleſs ſevere againſt a Rebellious Son, becauſe the Father did only with Pity and Tenderneſs rebuke him, and deſire to reclaim him. And it hath been of old obſerved, That where, and when the Church had leſs Secular Aid, there God did in a more ſpecial manner Vindicate it himſelf.

As to the other ſubordinate Parts of our Government under the Biſhops, ſuch as Arch-Deacons, Deans and Chapters, and the ſeveral Eccleſiaſtical Courts, I think none can deny, but either theſe very Orders, or ſomewhat like them, is neceſſary to the good of the whole, and the regular Adminiſtration of Affairs under the Biſhop; and theſe very Orders have been ſo long among us, that they can plead the Preſcription of very many Hundred Years, and are ſo interwoven with our Laws, and the Frame of our Government, and we have been ſo long uſed to them, that they have every way a firm and ſettled Right among us; and nothing in this Life can be ſtable, nor right certain, if, to other Arguments, a Preſcription of ſo many Hundred Years ſhall not be valid; for it is an Ancienter Right than any Man can ſhew for his Eſtate: And for theſe Reaſons, do I fully approve of them. And whatever fault is in any of them, I muſt needs aſcribe it to the Perſons, rather than to the Nature of the Offices. Much leſs can the Church be charged with blame, which, I am ſure, by her Canons, deſigns the preventing of all thoſe abuſes committed; and if the times at preſent will allow of no better, let every Man bear his own burthen.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of Christian Belief.

AND as I find *this Church thus Rightly Constituted*, and under a Government the most truly Agreeable to the Apostolical Pattern, and the Practice of all Ages: So I cannot but admire it more, if possible, for the soundness of its *Faith* and *Doctrine*.

For as it makes a true Faith necessary, as well as Practice; so it resolves this Faith into the true Author, and Object of it, GOD; It being most agreable, that we should learn from Him, what to Believe of Him, and by what actions to please Him.

Now He hath, in His Goodness, order'd certain Books to be written, by Men Inspired by Him, that do contain all that God would have us know, as from Him, in order to our Salvation. And these Books altogether we call the *Bible*, or *Holy Scriptures*. And this Book I am by the Church of *England* Taught, to look on, as a compleat Rule of Faith and Manners: And that neither a Man's own private Spirit, or Reason, nor the Authority and Commands of any Men ought to be listened or attended to in opposition to it.

I reckon also that this Scripture is clear enough, as to all necessary Points, to them that will make it their business without prejudice, to consider and understand it: And whatever hath been said against it, I find none, but only seeming Contradictions and Oppositions in it, which do allow of a very favorable Interpretation, and Reconciliation: And that even these seeming Difficulties, and Contradictions, as well as the divers Translations of Scripture, and the various Readings, are chiefly, or only in small and indifferent Cases, which concern not the Essence of our Religion. And to reconcile these seeming Oppositions, and to explain the whole, is a great part of the Office and Duty of the Clergy, the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, who are bound to Instruct the People out of this Book, and to convince the Gainsayers.

And though as St. *Peter* says, *Many do wrest the Scripture to their own destruction*; yet I look on it as very fit

and

and necessary, that this Scripture should be in the Vulgar Language, and often read by the People; That so they themselves may see, and know the Law, by which they must be judged; that they may be satisfied the Clergy do not impose on them, and teach them a Religion of their own invention; and seeing every Man must be judged at the last Day severally by himself, and according to what he himself hath done; it seems necessary, that he should now first judge for himself, whatever help or assistance he may have from another to make a right Judgment.

And this sufficiency, and clearness of the Scripture, is the reason why I do not depend on the Authority or Credit of the Priest that Expounds it, or Preacheth from it, but on the Scripture itself; he being always bound to bring some clear Passage of Scripture for the proof of what he saith. And therefore I do not look on any thing that he saith as infallible, any further than it is consonant to Scripture: Nor do I reckon any infallible Interpreter at all to be given to the Church. For if there were any infallible Interpreter of the Word, and Will of God, doubtless it would of all things have been the most plainly said, and the most frequently referred to in Scripture, because of the infinite use of knowing it, and the Danger of being ignorant of it; and God in his Wisdom and Goodness, would never have put so many particulars into the Scripture, which there is no such need we should know, and leave any thing out of Scripture, which it is so absolutely necessary that we should know.

And though it is true, that the *Church* did convey down to us the Books of Scripture, and so we receive the Scripture *from the Church*, as some of the Fathers have said, yet it doth not hence follow, That the Scripture received its *Authority* from the Church, or that the Church is above the Scripture, and to be believed before it. For the Scripture received its Authority only from God, who Inspired those Men that wrote it; and the Church, in conveying down the Scripture to us, is to be look'd on only as a *Witness* of such Books being written by Divinely Inspired Men, but not as giving us those

Books

Books by its own *Authority*, to be received by us as Divinely Inspired. For all that we need prove concerning the Scripture, is, That it was written by such and such Men, and received as Divinely Inspired. Now even Human Testimony is sufficient to prove this, without any Authority. And therefore to argue for the necessity of *Infallibility*, or *Divine Authority* in the Church, to assure us which is the Scripture, is the same thing as if we would admit only of a King and Parliament's Testimony, or Authority to prove, That such an Act of Parliament was formerly made. And therefore I may justly look on the Scripture as infallible, tho' the Church that conveys it down to us is Fallible. For otherwise, if the Church must be esteemed Infallible in every thing, because She conveys down to us the Scriptures, which all own to be Infallible; By the same reason, the Keeper of the Records of the *Tower*, or any where else, may urge that his Word ought to go as far as any of those Records, because he hath the keeping of them. And therefore as I may believe the Records, but discredit the Man; so I may believe the Scripture, tho' I believe not the Church. Besides, a Man may tell one thing true, but lye in many others; so the Church may be believed in handing down to us the Scripture, because it hath all collateral Evidence to strengthen its Testimony, but yet need not be believed in every thing else, which she pretends to. Tho' the Church of *England* will disown nothing that can be proved to have been Received and Practised by the *whole Church*, from the Apostles Days, such as the *Canon of Scripture*, the *keeping the first Day of the Week* holy, instead of the Seventh, *Infant-Baptism*, *Episcopacy*, &c. but very strictly insists on them, because She reckons herself bound to keep up Unity with the first and purest Ages, and cannot think it probable, or possible, that an Universal Practice, contrary to the Design of Christ and his Apostles, should prevail immediately after, and even during the Apostles Days.

But still we cannot allow of all things that the Church of *Rome* pretends an universal and constant Practice of, such as *Prayers to Saints*, *Prayers for the Dead*, *Transubstantiation*, *Adoration of the Host*, *Submission to the Pope's Supremacy*,

Supremacy &c. For they notoriously falsifie in their Quotations to this purpose, as any one will see that shall without prejudice, read their Books, and Ours, written on these Subjects. Much less do we own any Infallibility of *Tradition*, or make what is deliver'd down to us by it, to be of equal Authority with the Scripture, as the Council of *Trent* expresly doth. For Christ hath no where told us, That He would deliver some things by Word of Mouth, to be handed down to all Ages, which shall be of the same necessity, and Infallibility, with what is written in Scripture. Nor is there any intimation of any Man, or number of Mens being so extraordinarily guided and assisted, as without Error to convey down to us this Oral Tradition. And if they rely only on the general Promises made to the whole Church, of Christ's being *by his Spirit present with it*, we see not why a small part of the whole Church, *viz.* those of the *Roman* Communion, should take this Promise to itself, any more than the Reformed *Western* or *Eastern* Churches, unless it can be proved, That the *Italians* have better Memories, or are honester Men, and so fitter to convey down old Traditions to us, than the *Greeks*, or others; which, I believe, will be a hard matter to prove.——Therefore we both deny any Tradition to be of equal Authority with the Scripture, and especially we find no number of Men fit for the handing down such a Tradition to us, if it were given at first. And yet much less can we rely on any certain number of Men, telling us that, This, or That is such Infallible Tradition, and think ourselves bound to believe them, say they what they will. And yet this is plainly the Case with the Church of *Rome* concerning Tradition: They are not so solicitous that we should in all things believe, and do as the Ancient Church did, but as the present Church of *Rome* would have us; for they know that we Appeal in all Cases to the Ancient Primitive Church, and challenge to be judged by it. And they know also, that the Ancient Church hath believed, and acted otherwise in many particulars than they now do. But all their stickling for Tradition is to this purpose, that they may but get this one little Point, That Tradition is Infallible, and that they are the only Con-

Conveyers of it; that is, That they are Infallible, and that conſequently we muſt Believe, and do in every thing as they bid us. For nothing elſe is allowed for Tradition in the Church of *Rome*, but what the preſent Church ſays, and declares to be Tradition. And this being granted by us, there would be an end of all Diſpute. For then they may teach us a new Religion, a new Goſpel, and ſay they have Tradition for it, and who can gainſay it, and ſo make us deny our Old one, that Chriſt and the Apoſtles taught us: *But we have not ſo learned Chriſt.*

Beſides, I confeſs, I ſee not any neceſſity of an infallible Judge in the World. Nor hath God in his Providence been wanting to his Church, in not providing one, as ſome of the Church of *Rome* have blaſphemouſly argued. For ſeeing he hath given us, in the Scripture, a Rule and Foundation to proceed on, and our own Reaſon to apply it to our ſelves, and make uſe of it to our own purpoſes, I ſee not why we may not make uſe of this Book for its purpoſes, as well as we make uſe of other Books for other purpoſes. And why cannot God ſpeak his Will as plainly to be underſtood, as Men can, and do daily? And if there be Truth delivered in Scripture, Why ſhould not all men be able to apprehend and diſcover it? Seeing Truth is but one, and Reaſon is the ſame to all, and eſpecially ſeeing we ſhall be Judged, every Man for himſelf, and by a God that knows our hearts, who ſees with what ſincerity of heart, or with what byaſs and ill inclination, we apply this Rule to our ſelves.

Altho' if there were an Infallible Judge at *Rome*, according to their way of reaſoning, it would not be much to the advantage of the Church, eſpecially of us that live ſo far from *Rome*. For ſeeing I cannot hear the Pope himſelf ſpeak, they muſt all be Infallible, that to the fourth or fifth hand perhaps, convey what he ſaith to me; for if any of theſe miſtake, or willfully deceive me, What muſt I do? Nay if I were at *Rome*, the Pope cannot be ſpoke to at all hours; for he takes ſtate on himſelf ſometimes, and ſometimes hath the Gout, and other infirmities incident to old Men,

Men, and doth not love to be disturbed by every one. And yet if I should speak with him, I perhaps should not be much the wiser. For to make a full use of such an infallible Judge, we must be as Infallible as he; for we may mistake him without an Infallible Spirit; and if he doth tell me true, and I do not apprehend, or receive it so, I am still in a bad case. And yet it is evident that the words of an infallible Judge, or Interpreter, may be mistaken. For our Blessed Saviour himself was misunderstood, both by the *Jews*, and by his Disciples sometimes. And what shall we say then of this pretended Infallible Judge on the *Seven Hills*, who is often a Man of the weakest Understanding, and not always of the greatest clearness of Expression, and who doth not know Truth himself? For sometimes he hath excused himself from judging in a case in Divinity, by alledging that *he was not bred a Divine*, and therefore did not understand the Question. And yet methinks Knowledge is somewhat necessary in order to Infallibility. Besides, if he should by chance, speak a very true Sentence, but doth not know what it means, and therefore cannot explain it to me, I may easily mistake him, or apply what he saith to an improper purpose. For words are ambiguous, and some Mens Notions are found to fit things so well, that they often take the one for the other. And yet if there be any need of this Infallible Judge, there will be constant need of him; it will not be enough for him to speak now and then in a General Council, but very often, or always to sit, and have application made to him, according to their own Principles, and ways of arguing, because there are new Disputes, Questions, and Heresies that are raised almost daily; (for if the Pope can give any one standing Rule for resolving all Doubts, and defining Doctrines, we should be apt to think that God may have given this himself in Scripture; and this would spoil his Trade;) and if a Man hath not this Infallible Judge ready to resolve him, be he never so desirous of knowing truth, he may die in Heresie, and his case then must be very bad. So that there is an absolute necessity of a man's living very near the Pope, or else he can have no tolerable

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ſecurity of himſelf, but he may be in ſome conſiderable Error. And the People of *Rome* muſt be the only happy People in this life, that only are ſure of the true Catholick Religion, as living ſo under the conſtant droppings of Infallibility. And yet I believe *Rome* is the laſt place in the World to which the Prieſt would ſend you, to make you a good Catholick. But how if it happen after all this that this Old Gentleman at *Rome dare* not ſpeak even what he thinks, for fear of angring this, or that Party, *French*, or *Spaniſh*, or when a Queſtion is put to him, as *concerning the immaculate Conception of the Bleſſed Virgin*, He ſees that if he determine it either way, he ſhall loſe, or at leaſt diſoblige a very powerful and numerous Order, and therefore uſeth all the Tricks of Tergiverſation and delay, that can be, that he may not be forced to decide the Controverſie; as we know it happen'd within theſe Seventy Years? If this Gentleman did know more than other Men, what would his knowledge ſignifie if he were afraid to own or declare what he knows? Therefore let them Decide their own Controverſies firſt, by this their Infallible Judge, before they pretend to impoſe him upon us. Will any Man believe me that I have an Infallible Cure for the Gout, when he ſees me lie groaning under it all the Year round? And therefore not till they have determined among themſelves the Queſtion of the *Immaculate Conception*, of the *Power of the Pope*, beſides, or without a Council, and convinced the *French* King, and Clergy of the *Pope's Infallibility*, and abſolute *unlimited Authority*, and of the *nullity of the Liberties* of the *Gallican* Church, ſhall we ever think they believe themſelves, when they ſay the Pope is Infallible? or if He be, I am ſure it is to as little purpoſe, as if he were not. So that *Infallibility* is only a long Word to amuſe People. It is down-right Force that doth all things in the Church of *Rome*; and, as I dare ſay, at this time it will be granted me, the King of *France*'s Army ſignifies more than the Pope's Infallibility, to the Converting of his own Subjects to the *Romiſh* Faith.

And though we allow not of any Infallibility reſident in any Man, or number of Men on Earth, yet we have

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as great a certainty of the Truth of our Religion, as the Matter is capable of. We have all the Proofs of the Reality of our Blessed Saviour's Appearing in the World, of the Apostles Preaching according to his Will, and committing to Writing the substance of what they Taught, in those Books which we call the *New Testament*; and we have all the Evidence of the Truth, and Uncorruptness, and also of the Sense and Meaning of those Books, that we can expect, and that a Matter of that Nature will allow of; and I think no Man in his Wits will require more.

And according to this Church also, I allow of the Three Creeds, called by the Names of the *Apostles*, *Nicene*, and *Athanasian* Creeds; both because they are consonant to, and the very substance of the Scriptures, as to the great Points of our Belief; and also for the Antiquity of their Composure, and the general Assent and Reception that they have found for so many Ages in the Church of Christ. For I have a very great Reverence for whatever can be proved very Ancient in Religion, and to have been generally received by the Church; as we profess a wonderful Respect for the Four first General Councils, which Pope *Gregory* I. said he Reverenc'd as the Four Evangelists. For by giving this attention to the Ancients, we go the best way to keep our Religion the same, and also maintain Unity with them. So that if they were Part of the True Church of Christ, so are we; and if it would have been our Duty to have kept Unity with them, if we had lived in the same Age with them, but in Countries remote from them; it is as much our Duty to preserve the same Unity with them, though we live so long after them, seeing we pretend to be Members of the same Body of Christ with them.

But though we allow thus of the Ancient Creeds, yet we cannot approve of those Additions, which Pope *Pius* IV. had the Confidence to make to the *Nicene* Creed, according to the Definitions of the Council of *Trent*, where after the last Words of the *Nicene* Creed, *I look for the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life of the World to come*, He adds these Points, *Of Seven Sacraments properly so called; of a proper and propitiatory Sacrifice in the* Mass *for quick and dead*;

The Words of Pope *Pius*'s Creed.

dead; of Transubstantiation; of Communion in one Kind; of Purgatory; of Invocation of Saints; of the Veneration of their Reliques; of the Veneration of the Images of Christ, and the Blessed Virgin, and other Saints; of Indulgences; of the Church of Rome, *as Mother and Mistress of all Churches: Concluding, that this is the true Catholick Faith, out of which no Man can be Saved.*

For these Articles are neither consonant to Scripture, nor Antiquity; they were added by an unjust and illegal Authority, after the Decrees of a pack'd Assembly of Men; all the Ancient Church, as well as the bigger, and better Part of the Modern Church, disowning them; that is, the Doctrines were first Establish'd by the Bishop of *Rome*, and these Articles, pursuant to those Doctrines, were added to the Creed by the Bishop of *Rome*, and his Creatures, as if his Conscience and Judgment were to be a Model for all other Mens. And yet to these Articles are the Clergy of *Italy*, *France*, *Spain*, &c. bound to subscribe, as well as to the Trinity it self, and the Incarnation of the Son of God, or his Resurrection from the Dead.

But *we* keep only to the Creeds themselves, without any additions. And for a right understanding them, and to prove them consonant to Scripture, and pure Antiquity, we have several Books to help us, and especially that incomparable Exposition of the *Apostles Creed*, made by the most Learned, the late Bishop of *Chester*.

And these Creeds I not only fully *believe*, but I verily think it my Duty and Advantage to *profess* often, according to the Orders of our Church. For by so doing, I live in an actual Profession of the Christian Faith, according to my Vow of Baptism. I keep a *Summary* of my Belief constantly in my Head, and yet every Article is of great moment, if we mind the consequences of it. And whilst I keep but this Epitome of my *Christian Faith* present to my Thoughts, I shall not so easily be seduc'd into any Error in Belief or Practice, which is contrary to it.

I approve also of the Books of the *Apocrypha*, at least some of them, to be read for the Instruction of the People, as a kind of Comment on the *Old Testament*, or somewhat between the *Old* and *New Testament*. For we find some

ſome kind of Dawnings of Chriſtianity in them. But I am Taught not to reckon them of equal Authority with the Scriptures, nor do we eſtabliſh any Point of Doctrine on them, they having not been received by the *Jewiſh* Church before our Saviour's time, as Divinely Inſpired, but were written after the ſealing up of Prophecy under the Old Law, and before the Revelation of God's Will by the Goſpel. And they not having any Original Authority in themſelves, as written by Prophets, it is impoſſible the Church ſhould now give them the Authority of Divinely Inſpired Books, as the Council of *Trent* pretends to do. For the Church cannot make him a Prophet, that really was no Prophet, nor own'd for ſuch for many Hundreds of Years.

CHAP. III.

Of Goſpel-Obedience.

AND I find alſo that in this Church a good and holy life is as much urged, reckoned as neceſſary, and, I bleſs God, I think I can ſay as much practiſed, as any where elſe in the World.

Indeed, we confeſs that there is no man that lives, and converſeth in the World, but ſinneth, *Chriſt* being the only Perſon without ſin Original and Actual. And that after the very beſt things that we do, we are ſtill in Truth and Juſtice, to account of our ſelves but as *unprofitable ſervants, and that we do but what was our Duty to do.* And therefore we cannot think it poſſible for us to *merit* any thing, in ſtrict Juſtice at the hand of God, all the power and ability by which we do any thing of good, being of his giving. And therefore of the beſt of our Actions we ſay with Saint *Paul*, they are of the *ability which God giveth.* But tho' a perfect unſinning Obedience is not to be expected here, yet ſtill we reckon that the beſt *Obedience* we can perform, is neceſſary; that it is not ſufficient for us to *Believe*, Salvation being promiſed to ſuch a Faith only, as is productive of *good Works.*

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As to the concurrence of God's Grace, I reckon it abſolutely neceſſary in order to my doing any thing as I ought. And tho' I cannot define to a point, juſt how far *God* works, and how far *we* work in every good action, yet I am ſure *I can do ſomewhat through God that ſtrengthens me*; and I am ſure alſo, that *God worketh in me to will, and to do*, and that he will do more and more for me, according as I make a good uſe of the Grace that he gives me, and pray to him for more ſtrength, and therefore that I am ſomewhat active both in uſing of Mercies, and in Praying for more Grace. And I am ſure I anſwer all objections, and ſatisfie all difficulties, if I thus aſcribe all the good that I do to God aſſiſting me, and take all my failings and weakneſſes to my ſelf. And on this Ground as I ſhew my ſelf the neceſſity of doing the beſt that I am able, and cut off all plea of Merit for my ſelf or others; ſo I ſhew alſo the neceſſity of Prayer to God for his Grace, and lay a Foundation for Thankfulneſs to him.

For now by the New Covenant, there is a ſtrict obligation to all kind of Chriſtian Duties, tho, there is allowance made for humane frailties and infirmities. There is a way made through the ſufferings and merits of Chriſt for forgiveneſs on Repentance: But ſtill it is more acceptable with God, that we live ſo, as far as it is poſſible, as to need no Repentance.

I reckon good Works therefore abſolutely neceſſary in order to Salvation, but that it is not ſo much the Actions themſelves, as the Mind and Temper, and Deſign which they are done with, or the Chriſtian Principles which they proceed from, called *Faith* in Scripture, to which the worth of them is to be aſcribed, and for which they are accepted of God through the Merits and Mediation of Chriſt.

The good works which are required of us, as Chriſtians, in the *New Teſtament*, and in the *Ten Commands*, or the Moral part of the *Old Teſtament*, all Duties and Vertues there commanded I reckon my ſelf bound, as I am able, to perform; and all Sins or Actions there forbidden, I make Conſcience to abſtain from; and do not think that by obeying one Command I am free from others; or that becauſe there are ſins greater and leſs, yet that any are perfectly *Venial*.

I reckon my self bound also to obey the commands of my Lawful Governours, both in Church and State, not only for Peace and Order sake, but for the sake of God, who hath commanded me so to do, and am willing to forego my own Right often, and deny my own Profit, rather than disobey, or oppose a command of my Lawful Governors, where I can obey them without sin. But I religiously abstain from setting up the Commands of Men in opposition to the Commands of God, and cannot think that I shall be excusable, if I obey the Commands of men to the neglect of the Commands of God. And therefore for Example sake, tho' I pay all deference and obedience to the Laws of the Church, as knowing that God hath bid me to obey it; yet I dare not do, as is done in the Church of *Rome*, when the Church commands me one thing, and the Law of God the contrary, say, *God bids me obey the Church, and therefore it is all one which of the two I obey.* For God only bids me obey the Church in such cases as are not defined by the Laws of God; but doth not give the Church leave to command any thing contrary to God's Law, nor oblige me to attend to it, or obey it, if it should so command.

I thankfully own, and frequently commemorate the blessed Son of God's coming into the World to die for us, and satisfie for our Sins; but yet I think not, that he, by his Sufferings, hath either excused me from obedience to God's Commands, or exempted me from Punishment, if I obstinately persevere in my disobedience. For by Christ's coming, I am, if possible, more obliged to a good life, being now obliged to a stricter obedience out of Love and Kindness to him, who hath done and suffered so much for me. And all his Commands are Laws, which are strictly to be obeyed by me; only there is now a provision made, that sincere and hearty obedience, tho' mingled with many imperfections, (as it will always be whilst we live in these Houses of Clay) shall for the sake of Christ be looked on as if it were perfect, and our failings will in Mercy be forgiven, if we immediately repent us truly of them, and beg God's Pardon for them, and resolve for the future, by the assistance of God, to live better.

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And therefore I gratefully own the Doctrine of *Repentance*, and the hopes of Pardon on Repentance; but yet I think that it doth not at all encourage Sin, nor is it to be look'd on by us before we ſin, only it is provided to prevent Deſpair when we have ſinned, and there is no other Remedy. And it is a double Affront to God, for me to ſin on hopes of Pardon on my Repentance. For by this means I both break his Laws, and alſo abuſe his Mercies; and the moſt ſevere Puniſhments are threatned to ſuch a Courſe.

And if the Doctrine of Repentance, or of Pardon upon Repentance, will not give me any liberty to ſin, nor excuſe me if I ſin wilfully; then much leſs can I expect a diſpenſation from Obedience to the Laws of God any other way.

And by Repentance I do not underſtand, only a bare *Confeſſing* that I have ſinned, and ſorrow for it, only out of fear of Puniſhment, which they call *Attrition*, but reckon *Contrition* eſſential to Repentance, and neceſſary to the Pardon of my Sins; *viz.* that I be heartily grieved for the hainouſneſs of my Sins in themſelves, and their being ſo diſpleaſing in the ſight of God; and am fully purpoſed and reſolved, by the bleſſing of God, to live better for the future; and alſo, that neither by the power of the Prieſt, nor any other way, can this *Attrition* be turned into *Contrition*, or be ſufficient for Repentance and Pardon.

I reckon that every good Work done thus, by God's Aſſiſtance, and with an honeſt Mind, is well pleaſing to God, and will, if we perſevere, in due time have its reward. But this is to be aſcribed to his own Goodneſs, and the Merits of Chriſt, not to any worth or *merit* in the Actions themſelves. For how can a few good Actions, and mingled with many Failings, or a whole courſe of ſuch Actions, for the little while we live upon Earth, bear any proportion to, much leſs deſerve, Eternal Rewards in the World to come? Eſpecially how can any Man pretend to merit at his Hands, by whoſe very Aid and Aſſiſtance we do any thing that is good? For of the beſt of our Actions, we muſt in truth and juſtice ſay, as *David* ſaid of his own, and his Princes Offerings, 1 *Chron.*

29. 14. *All things come of thee, and of thy own have we given to Thee.*

I do not think that I do my Duty sufficiently by abstaining from Evil. For there are Affirmative as well as Negative Commands; and if I only should *eschew Evil*, and not endeavour to *do Good*. I must, according to the Tenor of the Gospel, be reckon'd among the *unprofitable Servants*.

And in this Consideration I take care not only to avoid the Sins, which I see many Christians too much indulge, or which I am, by Temper, Education, Custom, or Company, more than ordinary inclin'd to; but also I reckon it my indispensible Duty, to be constant in all the Parts of *Positive Christianity*; knowing that Heaven is not a State of silence, but infinite invaluable Happiness, and therefore (which I cannot possibly think) can be gotten with the doing of nothing. And even among Men, there is little commendation thought due to him, of whom the best that can be said, is, That *he hath done no harm*.

Now by *Positive Christianity*, or Affirmative Duties, I understand such things as I *actually do*, out of Obedience to God, and to serve him; and not only *forbear* doing what he forbids me.

So in reference to Himself, I am so far from doing any thing to dishonour, or blaspheme God, that I every way that I am able, seek to *glorifie*, *praise*, and *serve* Him.

In reference to my Neighbour, I not only forbear wronging him, but I do him all the good, by *good Advice*, by *speaking well* of him, by *aiding* and *assisting* him in any Case, that I am able.

And as to my self, I think it not enough to lie on my Bed, and avoid the sins of *Intemperance*, &c. but that by all the diligence that I am able, I study to *Improve my Mind*, get a *Conquest over my Passions*, and every way work up my self to a better Temper and Practice.

I am so far from doing the World harm, or making it worse, that I endeavour to leave it better than I found it. Hence I not only *Practise Piety* constantly my self, but I do what I can to *Promote*, and *Encourage* it in others; which,

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if I am in a *Publick Station, and Employment*, I can indeed do more effectually; and I am ſure I ſhall be called to an account why I do it not. And if I am in the moſt *Private Capacity* that can be, yet by my *ſilent and conſtant Example*, I ſhall do ſome good; by my *Advice* to my Friends I may do more; and by *occaſional Diſcourſe*, or making uſe of ſuch opportunities as will often preſent themſelves, I may be an Inſtrument to a great deal of good, and all this without being Conceited, or Pragmatical; without intrenching on other Mens buſineſs, going out of my own Place, or diſturbing the World.

I own a good and wiſe *Providence* watching over the World; and not only over *Publick*, but even extending to the moſt *Private* Affairs and Perſons, and accordingly I daily commit my ſelf, and all my Concerns, to the Government and over-ruling of that good God, that I am ſure loves me, and knows my Caſe and Wants better than I do my ſelf. But though I thus own a *Providence*, yet I take a Religious care not to tempt God, by running my ſelf into Evil, and then to expect God to keep me out, and deliver me. Juſt as though I know God's *Grace* to be All-ſufficient for me, yet *I* dare not expect it to keep me from Sin, if I wilfully, and with my Eyes open run into it.

For God's *Grace* and *Protection* is promiſed, and to be expected only in ſuch Caſes, as in which I have done all that was in me for my ſelf, and then I am allowed to hope for help from God: or in ſuch Caſes as into which I am unwittingly and unwillingly led, or in which I am innocently, and honeſtly engaged; and here I am ſure of ſuitable aid and ſupport, if *I* humbly and earneſtly make my Requeſt, but not where *I* wilfully expoſe my ſelf to Sin and Evil.

And on this Principle I do not *Expoſe my ſelf to Temptations*, either as to *Eſtate*, by *Gaming*, or as to *Life* by *Duels*, or as to *Religion*, and a *good Conſcience*, by aiming only at the *loweſt degree* of what is Vertuous or Commendable, or taking all the *Advantages* againſt Religion, and my Duty, that I think I poſſibly may; or by *going to Maſs*, or any other Irregular way of Worſhip, though perhaps out of *Vanity* only, and *Curioſity*, tempt God, and

my self. For I know not but God may leave me when I thus dally with him. And the wise Son of *Syrach* says, *He that loves danger, shall fall into it.* And our Saviour, That we must not thus, *Tempt the Lord our God.* For in all Cases, in which the Interest of my Soul is concerned, I do nothing by Fancy, or Humor, but with all the Judgment, and Reason that I have, I consider seriously the Fitness, or Lawfulness of it, as knowing that it is here, as in War, where one Error is Fatal; and if I be taken off in a sinful Practice, there is no Rescuing me, or Retrieving me for ever.

As to a *share of the things of this Life*, I keep my self in a great indifferency; for I am sure, That Life it self is not always Good, or a Blessing; and then much less are any of these things very desirable, that serve only for the Conveniencies of Life. And hence I never Pray to God for my own, or my Friends longer Life, only as far forth as it shall be for the Glory of God, and good of Religion, and the World, or in order to our being the better fitted and prepared for Heaven; much less am I solicitous for more Estate; or make That the Subject of my Prayers. For I am sure, that every one cannot have a great Estate; *few Men* can bear, or manage a great Estate as they ought, and *no Man* needs it. And in the Lord's own Prayer we are Taught, and allow'd only to Pray for *Bread*, or what is necessary, and That only from hand to mouth, *this day our daily Bread.*

I am therefore well content with the little that I have, as thinking that God knows my strength and ability best, and what is propereſt for me, and as knowing that if I should get more, tho' by the most Lawful means, and by the most moderate endeavours, it will be proportionably expected that I should do the more good, be the more useful in the World, and I shall have the more Talents to answer for the Receipt of; as on the other hand, the less I have, the less Temptations I am liable to at present, the less tied I shall be to this World, and the less will be my Account at the last Day. And I am very sensible, that when a Man comes to die, he will wish he had enjoy'd less of this World; there being at least some danger of *receiving our good things here.* And

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therefore tho' a great Eſtate may afford more eaſe and delight here, yet a mean Fortune ſeems to afford more ſecurity in order to hereafter. And hence I pray for ſuch a Portion as is fitteſt for me, and with which I ſhall do moſt good, that God would ſuit my Condition to my deſires, or my deſires to my Condition, that I may ſerve him chearfully and without diſtraction. And I think not that I am out of the favour of God, or even of good Men, becauſe I have leſs than others, but do much condemn the unjuſt meaſure of the World, of ſlighting a Man becauſe he is Poor, or of valuing him for his Outſide rather than for his Inſide. For Vertue and Prudence, Integrity and an earneſt deſire to do good, are more true Accompliſhments than Beauty, Riches, Honours, *&c.* And He is the moſt Conſiderable Man in the World, not that enjoys moſt of this World, but that doth moſt good in it; for him the World will moſt miſs, for him good Mens Prayers are moſt, over him the Providence of God will watch in a more peculiar manner; and therefore he is every way the moſt valuable and conſiderable Perſon.

I am Taught to *Pray* at home in Private always, and in my own Family too, conſtantly, eſpecially if I have not the advantage of going with my Family to the Publick Service daily. But if I have the opportunity of Publick Worſhip, I am conſtant in it, as in all other Offices of Piety, and fear not being called an Hypocrite; for this is another of the unjuſt meaſures of the World, to reckon a Man guilty of Hypocriſie, if he be more ſtrict in Religion, and more ſcrupulous of a Sin than others are; whereas true Piety muſt neceſſarily openly ſhew it ſelf, and we are bid to *Let our Lights ſhine before men, that they may ſee our good works, and glorifie God.*

And agreeable to this, I not only openly profeſs a ſtrict Regard to *Juſtice*, but exactly Practiſe it towards all Men. I pay all Men their Dues, all Officers and Offices in Church and State, according to St. *Paul*'s command, *Rom.* 13. I pay not only all honour and reſpect, but alſo all faithful ſervice and obedience to the King, as God's Vicegerent, and the common Father of the Country. I cannot endure to hear him ill ſpoken of, or hurt

in his Reputation, or injur'd as to his just Rights, either in Power or Revenue.

And as to my Fellow-Subjects, I maintain an exact Justice, so as not only to forbear open Violence, Oppression, or Fraud towards any, but also to take care punctually to pay my Debts, and to answer all Promises and Obligations. For not paying Debts, is much the same thing as Robbing, or violently taking from another, there being but very little difference between taking Money from a Man when he is unwilling, and keeping it from him when he desires it, and ought in Justice to have it.

From this Principle I am also punctual in paying my Tythes, and all such Publick Dues for the maintenance of Religion, and for my part take such care otherwise that they that wait on the Service of God, and watch for my Soul, may have a handsome maintenance, lest by my niggardliness it should happen that the Service of God should be discouraged (and Religion will always suffer in the Ministers of it) or lest worthy Men should be disheartened from entring into the Holy Office, or lest they that already serve at the Altar, should be forced to any unlawful, or any unbecoming means to maintain themselves; but that they may have advantages, and helps fit for their Improvement in Learning, that they may be able to defend Religion, and convince the Gainsayers. And this is no more than common Justice; for as they share not with others in Secular Business and Trade, and other advantagious ways of raising themselves, so they ought to be provided with such a maintenance as answers the Ingenuous Education they have had, and the Relation they bear to Religion.

Finally, I consider my self as to all the Capacities, and Relations, that I am in the World, and endeavour to behave my self suitably to them; knowing there is a distinct Duty and Obligation between Father and Children, Husband and Wife, Superiours and Inferiours, Friends and Equals, and which therefore every Christian must take care to answer and perform: And which are very fully expressed in that excellent Book of *The whole Duty of Man.*

But

But much of this Nature will come to be considered also in the Sixth Chapter, under the Head of *Civil Conversation.*

CHAP. IV.

Of the Service of God in Publick.

I Am Taught also in this Church, That it is not sufficient for me to *Believe* well, and to perform the Duty of a Christian by my self, or *in Private*, but that there is a *Publick Profession*, and an open Exercise of several Acts of Religion necessary.

For many Duties of Christianity do require the doing of them in Company, and it is an open Profession that doth most encourage Religion, and provoke other Men to an Imitation. And by the Nature of the Publick Service which I frequent, and by my demeanour in it, I give a Sample of my self, and Men may thence take an estimate how I am affected in my Mind, and how I carry my self in my more private Retirements. And I find in the Gospel, that Christ promiseth his Blessings, especially, to *Publick Services*, where *Two or Three are gathered together in his Name*, and therefore that it ought always to be preferred before Private. And *Publick Communion* hath always been accounted necessary in order to our *letting our Light shine before Men*, and making the World know what Opinion we are of. For the Publick Articles, and Confession of Faith of that Church with which I Communicate, being known to all the World, my Faith and Belief also, as to the main Articles of Religion, is known at the same time. But the excellency of Publick Service, and its Preference before Private, is fully made out in that lite excellent Treatise of Prayer by Dr. *Patrick*.

And for this Reason also, I Religiously abstain from Communicating with any Heretical or Schismatical Congregation, that is, with any that hold any erroneous Opinion contrary to any of the great Articles of Christianity, or that but keep private and separate Meetings from the

Publick Worſhip that is Lawfully Eſtabliſh'd, leſt I be reckon'd of their Party and Perſuaſion. For all ſuch ſeparate Meetings are breaches of Charity; and tho' they may poſſibly encourage no Heretical Opinions now, yet it is odds, but ſuch Opinions will find ſhelter and countenance among them. Such clancular and irregular Conventicles being the proper Seed-plots for ſuch Weeds to grow in. They break the Unity of the Body of Chriſt, and diſobey Lawful Authority in the Church. And I am ſure, that if they can Communicate without Sin, for them to ſeparate is a very great Sin. Beſides, that all ſuch private Meetings are dangerous to the State; for all Men that are ill-affected to the State, will Herd with them, and ſo will be ſecure of a Party. And it weakens alſo the Publick Strength, when a number of Men make themſelves a diſtinct Party, who will be ſo far from joining heartily with the Publick, that they reckon it their Duty to oppoſe, and find fault with what is done, if it be but to give ſome excuſe and countenance to their own Schiſm. And by thus finding fault with the Publick Management, they will alſo draw all Diſcontented People to them (who always are numerous in every State) and ſo not only ſtrengthen their *Schiſm* againſt the Church, but alſo Form a dangerous *Faction* againſt the State.

And as I thus Conſcientiouſly forbear the Going to any *Irregular Unlawful* Aſſemblies, tho' only out of Curioſity, becauſe my very being there but once, and out of no bad Deſign, is a giving them countenance and encouragement (for Number and Company is always encouraging) and is alſo a putting my ſelf out of God's Protection, by tempting him in running my ſelf into Evil and Danger, which he may juſtly ſuffer me to fall into: So alſo I am very ſcrupulous of leaving *my own Church* at all, or going to any other Church, or *Regular Congregation*. For the thus running to other Churches, generally argues a vanity of Mind; it is oft the Mother of Schiſm and Faction, and rather tends to advance Popularity than true Religion, it gives a very bad Example, it diſcouargeth my own Pariſh Congregation, and I do not think it ſo likely to have a Bleſſing from God. For

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God will give his Bleſſing to us eſpecially, where he himſelf hath placed us, and in Regular Ways, He being the God of Order, and not of Confuſion. And I am ſure I have at leaſt as good Prayers, and the Word of God it ſelf as pure, as I can find it in any other Church. And tho' it is poſſible, I may hear a neater and more elegant Sermon there, yet beſides, that I do not think there is ſo much Religion, properly ſo called, in hearing Sermons, they being not ſo much in reference to God, as to our ſelves, and for our own benefit; I ſay beſides this, if at my return home from ſuch a Sermon, I ſit down, and conſider what I have gotten by my wandring, I ſhall find, that rather my Curioſity, and Fancy are gratified, than Piety and Devotion advanced in me, and that I am rather *Pleaſed*, than *Inſtructed*, or made either *wiſer*, or *better*.

And I keep conſtantly to my own Pariſh on all occaſions, not only on *Sundays*, but other Days, ſetting down this for a Rule, That Prayers hinder no Buſineſs. And if it ſhould once happen that I ſhould ſuffer a little by it, I am ſure it will be abundantly recompenſed ſome other way; tho' commonly, there is no need of that, for ſo hath God in Mercy ordered the World, and Men's Concerns in it, that a Man may eaſily, at leaſt with a little fore-caſt, ſo order all his Buſineſs, that there ſhall be time enough both for Publick and Private Devotion. Nay, indeed, with moſt Men it is certain that I need deſire them only to ſpend that time in Devotion, or Reading, or in any other Method in order to Heaven, which elſe they would be perfectly idle in, and would, as we ſay, hang on their Hands, and which they are not oblig'd to ſpend in any neceſſary, or uſeful Buſineſs of Life. So that the moſt diligent Man in the World, and he that hath the moſt Buſineſs, with a little contrivance, may find time enough for conſtant Devotion; and it will be a Relaxation, as well as comfort to his Mind, and will procure for him moreover a Bleſſing from God on his other and Secular Buſineſs.

And when I come to the Publick Service, I come not out of Cuſtom, or to pleaſe others, or get a Reputation, or only with ſuch a kind of diſpoſition of Mind, as

when I make a Visit to a Friend, or go to any common Place and Company. For when I come to Church, as I am going, I always think with my self, Now am I going to appear before God in a more especial manner; and I reflect on some, or all the Designs of a Publick Prayer and Service, and for which I go now, and at all other times. For I must always propound to my self, and design by this, and every other Act of Publick Devotion, to *pay the Homage* due from me to my Great Creator and Benefactor, who hath thus Commanded to be Served, and acknowledged by me; *by praises to magnifie and extol* Him for his Infinite Perfections in himself; by *Thanksgivings, to thank and honour* Him for the Mercies already vouchsafed to all Mankind, his Church in general, or This Church and Nation, as well as my self in particular; and by my humble *Prayers and Supplications* to beg a continuance of all the good things we enjoy, and a supply of those that we do, or shall want, for my self, and others; as also by my *Example*, as far as I can, to keep up, and encourage Religion and Piety in the World, and shew what Church and Profession I am of.

And my but thinking of these Ends of my coming to Publick Service, will even awe me into a Devout and Reverent Carriage, and will make me attentive when I am there, and so to make a good use and application of all Parts of Publick Service to my proper Occasions.

I always contrive to come before Prayers begin, both to shew my willingness, and desire to Worship God, and that the Publick Service may not be discouraged for lack of Company, and lest I miss any part of Service, especially the first part, in which there is both the *Confession*, *Absolution*, and the *Lord's Prayer*, and also that by my coming a little before Prayers begin, I may have some time to prepare my self for what I am going to do.

In the first place I fall down on my Knees, to thank God for all his Mercies, and particularly for this other opportunity of appearing before him, beseeching him to give a Blessing on all the Congregation, as well as on my self, that He will assist us in what we are about to do, and accept of what we shall do; pardoning our Infirmities, and doing for our selves, our Church, and Nation, abun-

abundantly more than we are able either to ask or think, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt that dyed for us.

When I am riſen from my private Prayers, and at all other times during Publick Service in the Church, I uſe as little *Ceremony* to others as poſſibly I can (tho' I take care to be wanting in no part of Civil Ceremony abroad in a common place.) For I reckon, that the common Ceremonies of Bowing to one that comes in, or to a Friend that I ſee in the Church, or to one that Sneezeth, or on the like occaſions, is a kind of Compliment that may very well, and ought to be ſpared; for it doth not ſo well become the Place where I am, nor the Buſineſs I come about; it argues ſome kind of lightneſs of Mind, or will create it, and is certainly diſtracting both to myſelf and others; and I may be ſure, that no Man that conſiders the Sacredneſs of the Place, and Occaſion, and that ſees my Civility and Courteouſneſs abroad, will ever think the worſe of me, if I be more reſerved and leſs Ceremonious at Church.

And all along the Service, I take care both to be Uncovered in token of Reſpect, and to ſhew I conſider the Majeſty of Him before whom I appear, and alſo to carry my ſelf with all Gravity, Silence, and Inoffenſiveneſs to others, neither by Talking, Gazing about, nor any light or unſeemly Carriage to be a diſturbance to them; all indecency of Carriage, arguing a wandring Mind, and is both unbecoming Religion, and a ſcandal to other Men. Neither do I bring Dogs into the Church, or encourage thoſe that are brought, very great unſeemlineſs often following it, and it being at the beſt, and always a hindrance of Compoſedneſs of Thought, a diſtraction of Devotion, and argues ſome Irreverence towards God.

While the *Exhortation* is Reading, I ſtand gravely, and mind ſeriouſly what is there ſaid, and thereby more fit my ſelf for all that is to follow, reſolving by the Bleſſing of God, to keep my Thoughts ſo fixed on what I am going to do, and every part of Service, as the Worſhip of the Great God, and the Salvation of my own Soul do require.

At the *Confeſſion*, with the Congregation, I fall down on my Knees, that being the Poſture injoined by the Church,

Church, and the humbleſt Poſture eſteemed in theſe Countries. And I not only acknowledge my own ſins, and the ſins of the Church and Congregation in general, but as far as I am able, ſuch particular ſins of my own as are either greater in themſelves, and of a more provoking nature, or elſe, that having been lately committed, had not been ſo very particularly and fully Repented of by me. I am heartily ſorry for them, and beg God's Pardon of them, that they may never riſe up againſt me in this Life, if it be his Will, but eſpecially not in the other Life. And whilſt I beg his Grace, that we may live Godly, Righteous, and Sober Lives, at the ſame time I reſolve with my ſelf, that by his Grace and Aſſiſtance, I will ſtrive and endeavour to lead every way a better Life, be more conſtant in every good Action, and more carefully avoid thoſe ſins that I have juſt now confeſſed, than hitherto I have done.

When the Prieſt pronounceth the *Abſolution*, both here, and in the Communion Service, I attend to it, and receive it with all gladneſs and humility of Mind, begging, that this Pardon, which God hath given his Miniſters Power to pronounce in general, may be applyed to myſelf, and my caſes in particular. Therefore I eſteem this Abſolution very much, it being the Voice of God, and being pronounced at the Command of God, as the *Auguſtine* Confeſſion ſpeaketh; but it being only on the Conditions that we *Repent* and *Believe*, I immediately reſolve to Repent and Believe, and I pray to God to Aſſiſt me, and Abſolve me; and I am encouraged to hope that I am in God's Favour, and that he doth pardon and accept of me, when I hear this gracious Declaration of his Mercy to all true Penitents, And I take it as well, and doubt not but it will be to as good purpoſe to me, as if it had been ſpoken to myſelf alone, and in a more preſuming way and manner. For it being pronounced by ſo truly a Conſtituted Prieſt, in God's Name, and with his hearty deſire, and Prayer for Pardon to his Congregation accompanying it, and the People at the ſame time devoutly accepting of it, and the terms on which it is granted; there ſeems nothing wanting as to what I can expect from the *Church*; and I have the ſame aſſurance alſo from *God*, as if it were pronounced the moſt authoritatively, according

cording to the Practice of the Church of *Rome*, *I abſolve thee.* For ſeeing the Pardon of ſins is in reference to the Life to come, *I* cannot expect ſo full and abſolute a Pardon here, but that if *I* continue in, or return to a vitious Courſe, even my former ſins will return upon me. And ſeeing it comes only from God, *I* regard eſpecially the Promiſe of God, who hath promiſed forgiveneſs of ſins to them that truly Repent, and care not whether the Miniſter, who is as it were the Herald, or Perſon, who makes Declaration of this Promiſe, pronounce it authoritatively, *I abſolve thee*, or declaratively, *He abſolveth.* Eſpecially *I* being very ſure, that God will rather do more than leſs, when He ſees we take not too much upon ourſelves. He loves Modeſty and Humility in all Caſes, eſpecially in reference to himſelf, and will rather give the more, when we preſume, and challenge the leſs.

When the *Lord's Prayer* is read, *I* join with it, and repeat it, as the Church enjoins; my very repeating it, ſtirring up my own attention better to regard and mind the full and comprehenſive ſenſe of each Petition; and to help our Infirmities, this moſt excellent Prayer is ſeveral times uſed, that ſo we may have opportunity to recollect, or attend to that ſenſe of it the ſecond or third time, which by reaſon of the narrowneſs, or diſtraction of our Minds, or the vaſt ſenſineſs of the Prayer itſelf, we are not able to mind ſufficiently the firſt time that it was read.

Indeed *I* very much approve of, and commend this Order of our Church, in requiring that the People ſhall with their owu Mouths *Repeat* the *Confeſſion*, *Lord's Prayer*, *Pſalms*, *Hymns*, and other *Reſponſes*. For by this the People are Taught, that they are as much concerned in the Service of God, as the Prieſt, and ought to bear a part in it. The Peoples being required to Anſwer ſometimes, awakens and quickens their Attention and Devotion, which elſe would be aſleep or remiſs, and by their thus frequently joining in full Sentences, and by ſaying *Amen* at the end of every Prayer, they not only hear how the Prieſt prays to God, but make every Prayer and Praiſe their own Act and Deed, are active in the Ser-

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vice of God, keep up a Senſe of God and Religion more in their own Minds, and ſo may hope to have a Bleſſing from God accordingly. But in reading the Pſalms, or other Hymns alternately, *I* not only mind what *I* read myſelf, but as much what the Prieſt readeth, and apply it all to myſelf, and our own Caſes, with ſuch a temper of Mind as becomes a Chriſtian.

Indeed *I* am very glad, that the *Pſalms* are ſo much uſed, and ſo conſtantly in our Liturgy, not only by reaſon of our Conformity herein with the Ancient People of God, the *Jews*, and the Ancient Church of Chriſt in the firſt Ages, but alſo for the Senſineſs and Devotion of the *Pſalms* in general, which may be eaſily and properly applied to ourſelves, and to our caſes, if we by *Zion*, *Jeruſalem*, &c. underſtand our own Church and Nation, turning ſometimes a Prayer into a Denunciation, and an Aſſertion into a Prayer, as there will be occaſion, and which will be very natural and eaſie for a truly devoutly diſpoſed Mind to do; as every one may ſee, that will but read and uſe Doctor *Patrick*'s excellent Paraphraſe on the Book of *Pſalms*. But eſpecially *I* admire the Book of *Pſalms*, for all the *Thanksgivings*, and *Praiſes* to God in it, that make up the bigger part of that moſt excellent Book, *Thanks* and *Praiſes* being doubtleſs the moſt acceptable part of Divine Service, they being what we offer to God for his ſake, not our own, they arguing the moſt elevated and well-diſpoſed Mind. For the moſt ſelfiſh Man will *pray* ſometimes, and *beg a Boon*; but pride, ſtubbornneſs, or ingratitude, will not ſuffer him to *Praiſe*, or *Thank* his Benefactor. And yet the higheſt of the Praiſes and Thanks that we can give, are both ſtrictly due to us from God, and are all the Returns that we properly can make Him for all the innumerable Mercies we receive from Him.

When the *Leſſons* are read, *I* compoſe myſelf with all the Attention and Reſpect imaginable, as to the Word and Meſſage of God himſelf to me, and cannot but admire at, and pity thoſe Men that ſeem mighty attentive at, and place much Religion in hearing a *Sermon*, and yet are perfectly careleſs at, and ſeem almoſt to deſpiſe the Reading of the *Scripture*; ſeeing whatever Authority or Excel-

Excellency any Sermon hath, is derived from these Scriptures; and that the very best Sermons must be judged of, and examined by the Scripture, and are to be condemned, if they are not consonant to it. And tho' *I* know the Scripture very well already, and know before-hand what will be Read, yet *I* am never the less attentive. For by exact attention it very often falls out, that *I* observe somewhat from the Scripture, which *I* had not observed before; at least I *I* have my old Notions revived, and as from *God* further impressed on me. And also by coming to hear the same things read which *I* knew before, *I* encourage the more Ignorant to come, and countenance the Publick Service, as well as do an Act of Homage and Worship to God. Therefore *I* expect not new things to be Taught me generally, either out of the Scripture, or in Sermons, but by constantly having the same great Truths urged to me, *I* have a more exact and uniform Notion of Religion imprinted on me, and my Mind is more inclined and worn into a suitable composure.

The *Hymns* between, and after the Lessons, *I* join in, as *I* do in the *Psalms*, they being all Praises of God, either for the coming of *Christ* into the World, and being made known to us, when so many of the great Men of the World, both formerly, and now, have been ignorant of Him, as in the *Magnificat*, *Benedictus*, and *Nunc dimittis*; or else to Praise God for that, and all other his Mercies in the *Te Deum*, and other Hymns. And surely no Man can grudge such a Piece of Service now, who hopes that it will be his Business and Happiness to do the like to all Eternity.

With the same Devotion do *I* stand up, and rehearse the *Creed*, with the Priest, to evidence my Continuance in the Faith of Christ, of which that is an Epitome. Besides that to profess my Belief in God, and of what He hath Taught, is a very acceptable piece of Service; *I* Honour God by it, and make myself more Religiously affected: So that every Command of Religion will have a better effect on me; for the force of every Command depends on the truth of the *Creed*, and is enhanced, as to me, by a serious Reflection on my *Creed*.

And

And then with the Congregation *I kneel* down alſo, and in all things demean myſelf, as the Order of the Church requires, and as the reſt of the Congregation doth; the *Poſture* being in our Church always very properly ſuited to the *occaſion*. And by my but obſerving the Rules of the Church in theſe Caſes, *I* exerciſe two Vertues at once, *I* ſhew my Peaceableneſs, as well as my Devotion.

And accordingly at *Prayers I* never *ſit*, but *kneel*, that being the lowlieſt Poſture, eſpecially in theſe Countries, and *I* cannot carry myſelf too lowly when *I* ſpeak to the Great Majeſty of Heaven and Earth, and that not only for others, for our Church and Nation, but for myſelf alſo, and for my own Eternal Salvation.

And though in all the *Prayers* it is not required, nor ſuffer'd that I repeat them aloud, with, or after the Prieſt, as in the Confeſſion and Lord's Prayer; yet I fail not to go along with him in my Mind, and generally alſo to prevent the diſtraction of my Thoughts, and to faſten and ſecure my Attention, I even ſpeak the Words with my Lips, yet ſo as not to be heard, for that would breed diſturbance in the Church, which I always take care religiouſly to prevent. And to be ſure, I am ready always, at the end, to anſwer *Amen* audibly; for I thereby keep my Attention more awake by anſwering ſo often, and ſhew I join in all the Prayer that went before, and make it my own.

When any of the *Prayers* are read, I think it not enough for me to ſay my own *Private Prayers*, as they are Taught to do in the Church of *Rome*, but take care to mind, and pray earneſtly for what the Prayer deſireth; our Service being for this end in our own Language, that every Man may underſtand, and join with the Prieſt. And I muſt not think, that his Praying for me, or my being preſent, will ſuffice me, or do me good, unleſs I really with him Pray for myſelf and others.

And what is here ſaid of *Publick Prayers* for others, extends alſo to *Thanksgivings*, either for general Bleſſings, or for particular Mercies to particular Perſons commemorated, as to *Women when Churched*, or *Perſons recover'd from Sickneſs*, &c. For the ſame Charity that makes me ſo far

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to make others Concerns my own, as to pray for their good, will oblige me alſo to give Thanks to the God of all Mercies, for all the Bleſſings and Benefits He hath beſtow'd on them.

As I omit no opportunity of going to Church, ſo not of receiving the *Sacrament*, and yet I always take moſt religious care to prepare myſelf before I come to it. For the frequent Celebration of this Holy Office, is what the Church of Chriſt always practiſed, and our Church expects: And a conſtant uſe of it, and of Preparation in order to it, I look on as a moſt prudent, if not neceſſary means, to counterbalance the conſtant Sollicitations and Temptations of Life. And by ſuch a conſtancy I both Honour and Obey God, and keep my own Devotion warm, and by the bleſſing of God, ſhall make Piety, and Goodneſs even cuſtomary and habitual to me, which is the greateſt Bleſſing ſurely of which we are capable in this Life. I look on it indeed, as the moſt holy Office of our Religion, and therefore of all things in this Life dread being *Excommunicated*, or debarred from coming to it; *Excommunication*, when it proceeds on juſt Grounds, being, as *Tertullian* calls it, an *earneſt or foretaſte of the laſt Judgment and Condemnation there*; and therefore I take care neither by *Hereſie*, *Schiſm*, *Prophaneneſs*, nor yet by any *contempt* of Authority, or of the Eccleſiaſtical Courts, to have it pronounced againſt me; for to ſay no more, I think no wiſe Man would willingly come under the ſuſpicion of ſo great and intollerable an Evil, or have it on any account inflicted on him.

But tho' I look thus on the Sacrament as the moſt holy Office of our Religion, as a holy thing which Chriſt hath left to be remembred by, as it were to ſupply, and to make up the loſs of his Bodily Preſence, and to the due receiving of which Chriſt hath promiſed unvaluable Bleſſings, it being called by the name of his *Body and Blood*, yet ſtill I know it is but Bread and Wine, that there is no *Tranſubſtantiation*, the very Body of Chriſt that hung on the Croſs being in Heaven, and not here, it being againſt the Truth of Chriſt's Natural Body, that it ſhould be in more places than one at the ſame time. And on this account I Worſhip not the Sacrament, or what appears

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to my Eyes, but God and Christ in my Mind: As I reckon not the Celebration of the Sacrament to be at all a Propitiatory Sacrifice, my hopes being only in the Merits of that Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, which was once Offered, as St. *Paul* says, to take away our sins, of which this is only a Commemoration.

I am constant also at all *Sermons* in my own Parish, and when I can conveniently, often at Sermons in other neighbouring Churches, when we have none in our own, and hope to receive good by them, they being part of the ordinary Means which God hath appointed for my Instruction, and therefore am very Attentive as to the Explication of that Word of God, by obeying of which I hope to be Saved. But yet I never suffer the *Sermon* or my love to it, to justle out, or undervalue the *Prayers*, or the *Sacrament*, these being more properly the *Service of God*, and *Acts of Devotion*, than that. For Prayers, and Praises, and the Sacrament, are directed to God, have a direct relation to him; but Sermons are especially in reference to myself, and for my own Information, and therefore must yield to the other, as the Means are less noble than the End. Besides also, the Scriptures being read have more Authority than a Sermon, and are more necessary, and should be minded accordingly. And it is the same thing to me, whether the Parson read his Sermon, or Preach without reading. Although I must needs say, there is hardly any one Man in the World but will speak better, and more useful Sense *premeditately* than *ex tempore*; and tho' he that speaks *ex tempore* may speak with more heat, yet he that writes down what he says, is like to speak with more Consistency; and if we look on a Sermon to be any way in reference to God, surely it ought to be as sensy and consistent as we can frame it. And I reckon that every Man that may be exceeding useful in the Church, hath not such a presence of Mind, fluency of Expressions, or grace of Delivery, as is requisite in a popular Preacher; and yet there is scarcely any Man so good at *ex tempore* Preaching, but will speak not only with more consistency and weight, but also will be guilty of less Impertinences and Improprieties, if he write down his Sermons than if he do not: and I am taught to mind

mind always the *Senſe* of a Sermon, more than the *Noiſe* and *Tone* with which it is ſpoken, and *I* deſire rather to have my Reaſon convinc'd and Judgment informed, than my Paſſions and Affections raiſed by the moſt Eloquent and Pathetical Harangue.

As to *Baptiſm*, I am taught the abſolute neceſſity of it, where it can be had, we being by it admitted into the number of Chriſt's Diſciples, made part of his Body, and have a ſhare in all the Prayers for, and Bleſſing to his Church. And therefore I take a moſt religious care that my Children be Baptiſed as ſoon as conveniently they can. But I bring them to Church, and ſuffer them not to be Baptiſed at home, unleſs in caſe of utmoſt extremity. For as I think that Publick Service ought to be preferred before Private, ſo I think there is no Office, or part of Religious Service that more neceſſarily requires to be Publick, than this of Baptiſm, the Child being by it ſolemnly admitted into the Church of Chriſt, of which the whole Congregation are to be witneſſes, and all their Prayers being deſired in the behalf of him. And when any one is *Baptized*, I both put my ſelf in mind of my own Duty, as Chriſtian; and examine my ſelf how I have kept my Vow of *Baptiſm*; and how carefully I have performed my promiſe and Duty towards thoſe Children in whoſe name we anſwered as Godfathers; and alſo devoutly and heartily (as the Church teacheth) pray that this Child may have Grace to live ſome way agreeable to this holy Religion, into which he is now admitted.

I am glad alſo to aſſiſt at the *Catechizing* of Children, and think it no time loſt to have the Fundametals of our Religion repeated over in the Catechiſm. For it is by them that I, as well as the Children, can be ſaved. And I think it a mighty advantage to have the whole ſum, and ſubſtance, not of one Text of the Scripture, or of one point, but of all Scripture, and of whole Chriſtianity dilivered at once, as it is in the Catechiſm. And it will naturally put ſeveral things into my mind, which either I did not mind before, or had forgot. And ſo I ſhall alſo benefit my ſelf as well as countenance Religion, and the Publick Service, and encourage the Children, and do them good.

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I omit not to bring my own Children, or God-children, as ſoon as they are about 11 or 12 years old, to be *Confirmed* by the Biſhop, (having firſt taught them their Catechiſm, and the deſign of Confirmation) for by ſo doing I obey the Church, ſhew my own Religious care, make ſome good impreſſions on the Childrens minds, as to Religion, and put them in mind of their Vow of Baptiſm, and the neceſſity of their performing it, and I hope I get further a great deal of good for the Child. For the *Prayers* of one good man for another are very available; and therefore, much more thoſe of Perſons ſo highly Commiſſionated by God as our Biſhops are, who not only *Pray* for, but alſo are impowered to *Bleſs* in God's name. And I have much Reaſon to hope that God will hearken to them, and grant what they pray for, and make good, and fulfil what by their Bleſſing us in God's name, they give us ground to hope for.

When the *Banns* are publiſhed in the Church, or People are *Married*, I am ſo far from making it a matter of ſport, as many do, that it ſtirs me up to pray for a Bleſſing from God on them; and it at the ſame time puts me in mind of my own Vow and Promiſe in Marriage, how I have performed it; and I make it alſo an occaſion of a freſh engagement in my ſelf to keep it ſtrictly. For tho' I look not on *Matrimony* as a *Sacrament*, yet I look on it as the moſt ſolemn Engagement among Men, and Sacred, as being a Vow made before God, as witneſſed to before men, and in a caſe of the greateſt moment in this Life: And therefore in all reſpects a proper occaſion for ſerioufneſs and devotion.

When the *Sick* are mentioned in the Church to be prayed for, I pray for them heartily (as I would others ſhould pray for me, if I were in the like caſe) not abſolutely that they ſhould recover, but if it be God's Will, and if it will be moſt for God's Glory, and for their Good; that God will give them Patience and Thankfulneſs, and make both their ſickneſs, and death it ſelf, when ever it ſhall happen, a real Bleſſing to them.

And I make uſe of theſe *Prayers for the Sick* to be inſtances to my ſelf of my own Mortality, and Arguments with my

my ſelf to prepare for Death, which I know is appointed for all men. And hence I go to *Viſit* the Sick that are of my Acquaintance, both to comfort them, and give them good advice, and alſo to work upon my ſelf; and I apply to my ſelf what I ſay, or I hear others to ſay to them, concerning their Sickneſs and Death; and eſpecially when I am Sick *I* ſend for the Parſon of my Pariſh to aſſiſt me, and counſel me, to pray for me, and guide me, and to put me in mind of ſeveral things in order to my departure hence, which elſe *I* ſhould forget. For always People need moſt advice in their own caſes, eſpecially when of ſo great Importance; for they are too apt to be partial, and favourable to themſelves. And hence *I* make no ſcruple to Confeſs, if not particularities, yet the general nature of my Sins, eſpecially thoſe of the deepeſt dye, and that lye hardeſt on my Conſcience. For if *I* be in earneſt to have ſuch ſins pardon'd, Religious Prudence will oblige me to take all poſſible care that *I* may throughly underſtand the ſtate in which *I* am, and the danger of my Condition, and my ſureſt method in order to a Pardon and Cure; and all this *I* may beſt hope for from God's Miniſter, who both loves me, and is moſt likely to Judge moſt unprejudicedly of me, hath a particular concern in me, and for me, and is by God impower'd, and enabled to aſſiſt and help me. For theſe and the like Reaſons, *I* think it not ſufficient to be prayed for in the Church when *I* am Sick, but *I* deſire frequently to be *Viſited*, and not only to Examine myſelf, but alſo to ſubmit to another's Examination and Direction, but ſtill am ſenſible that it is my own Repenting that is required in order to the pardon of my Sins, elſe his *Abſolution* will ſignifie nothing,

And all theſe Parts of Religious Service, *I* am ſo far from ſlighting or undervaluing, becauſe they are preſcribed, and we commanded to uſe theſe Words, and no other, that *I* like them much the better. For as far as *I* can find, ſince Miracles ceaſed, there always was a *Form of Prayer* and Service preſcribed, and it never was left to every Clergy-Man to ſay what Prayers, and uſe what

what Form of Service he pleaſed, much leſs was an *ex tempore Prayer* to God in Publick ever approved of. For beſides the Indecency that will be often committed in *Extemporary* Prayers (which ſurely ought to be prevented if we can, when we Addreſs ourſelves to the Infinite Majeſty of Heaven and Earth in behalf of his Church, as well as on the concerns ofour own Souls,) it ſpeaks reſpect to God, when we take all poſſible care, that nothing but what is well weigh'd be offer'd to him. A preſcribed Form alſo is the only way to keep up Uniformity among ourſelves. And ſeeing whatever is fit for us to ask in Publick, is known ſufficiently, why ſhould not the Expreſſions to be uſed on ſuch occaſions be defined alſo? If the Matter be known, Why ſhould not the Words? Beſides that, it is an eaſe to my Mind, when *I* know before-hand what *I* am to join in. And *I* confeſs there are very few Men, with whoſe *extempore* Prayers *I* would willingly join. In *extempore* Prayers alſo it is too often found, that he that Prays, will often more expreſs and vent his own private Thoughts and Paſſions, than the deſires, and wants of his Congregation, and the Church; all which are things utterly to be avoided in all Religious Offices.

And ſeeing a *Preſcribed Form* in general, is on many Accounts thus expedient, or neceſſary in Publick: *I* think nothing can be objected againſt *our Liturgy*, either for the *Matter*, or for the *Frame*, and *Compoſure* of it. For it is, for its *Matter*, exactly agreeable to Scripture, and the Genius of our Religion; nothing prayed for, or done, but what (as far as we can learn of his Will by Scripture) is acceptable to that Great GOD, whom alone we ſerve, and pray to: And for the *Compoſure* of our Liturgy, it is in every thing ſuch, as Publick Devotions ought to be, and ſo exactly after the ancient pattern, fitted with Reſponſes, Hymns, Prayers, Thankſgivings, Scriptures read, Sermons preach'd, Sacraments adminiſtred, and all other Occaſional Religious Offices performed, that I cannot but admire it, and muſt proteſs my wonder and aſtoniſhment, that any perſons ſhould really either diſlike, or ſlight it.

But *I* will not now ſtay to vindicate the ſeveral parts of it, from the Objections brought againſt it,

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but refer all Men to what the Judicious Mr. *Hooker* hath written on this Subject, in his *Eccleſiaſtical Polity*.

And though our Church hath not defined exactly and commanded poſitively what ſhall be done by every particular Man on either the Feaſt, or Faſt-days, yet ſeeing ſhe hath ſet apart ſuch days for thoſe purpoſes, I think my ſelf bound to have a particular reſpect to them.

And accordingly I make uſe of the *Feaſt-days*, not only in joyning with the Congregation in the Prayers appointed for that day, but alſo in thanking God in private for all Mercies, and particularly for the Mercy commemorated, in ſerving God more that day than ordinary, and endeavouring particularly by my Charity to do more good, and by a prudent demeanour of my ſelf to encourage both Thankfulneſs in my ſelf, Friendſhip in the World, and Piety towards God.

The *Faſt-days* alſo I reſpect with ſome kind of denial of my ſelf, as to my uſual, and lawful liberty in Meat and Drink; and this without affectation, or making a noiſe, or placing Religion in the kind of Meat and Drink. And Faſting being in Scripture preſcribed, I cannot think it an improper method for the ſubduing of Sin in us. And ſeeing it is neceſſary, and ſuppoſed in Scripture, that we Faſt ſometimes, all reaſon and peaceableneſs, as well as obedience, will eaſily determine me to that time which the Church ſhall appoint. But ſtill I take care that my Faſting neither put me out of humor, nor make me to be peeviſh, or conceited in my ſelf, nor cenſure other men, leſt I make my good to be evil ſpoken of, and ſo loſe the benefit of it.

In ſhort, I am ſtrictly Regular according to the Rules of the Liturgy, and Command of the Church of *England* in her Canons, and I wiſh all Men were even as I, and pity them that are not, and pray to God that they that are otherwiſe minded, may be convinced, and ſee their Errour. I thank God who hath given me ſo good an underſtanding in my duty, and hope by my ſteddineſs and good temper to prevail with others. But yet I for-

bear judging or condemning all that do not exactly as I do, or that agree not with me in all these things, which though they are not Fundamentals, yet are such things as on which the flourishing of Religion, and the peace of the Church do very much depend. For I consider some great prejudices may lie on their minds which may in time be removed, that they may be in some involuntary mistakes which may be corrected; and as I have an opportunity, and as becomes the nature of my place in the World, I will endeavour to correct. But still I do not so much attend to other Mens Scruples, as to be by them deterred from my own duty, nor provoked to censure and condemn them; for our Holy Religion professed in this Church, teacheth me to take care of my own Practice, but not rashly to condemn other Men. For I can make more excuses for others, than I can for my self: and for *me* to be wanting in any part of Service, or Ceremony, I may justly think may be a greater fault, than for others, who perhaps know not, or mind not so much the Reason and Consequence of being strictly regular. At least I am sure that their being guilty of a fault, will not excuse me, if I act the same; and every Man shall stand or fall to his own Master. And I am sure it more becomes an humble and private Christian to look after his own Actions, than to be sharp in spying out, or severe in censuring the Carriage of others.

CHAP. V.

Of Additions to the Faith.

I Reckon the Doctrine taught and professed in this Church, and the Way and Method of Divine Service here used and practised, to be sufficient to Salvation; and that as there is nothing Commanded that is unlawful, or superfluous, (the *Romanists* themselves condemning nothing that we teach as necessary, but owning it all to be fit and good;) so also I think there is nothing wanting, or deficient, that there is no necessary or useful Article of Faith that is not in this Church expresly owned,

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no Duty towards God, or Man, that is not according to the Rules of this Church taught, and practiſed. And therefore whatever is further urg'd as neceſſary to Salvation, or is required of me in order to Church-Communion, I cannot but think either falſe or unneceſſary.

And on this ground I muſt diſown the belief of the Infallibility of the Biſhop or Church of *Rome*, or ſubjection to them, to be neceſſary in order to Church-Communion or Salvation: Though the *Romaniſts* preſs this as the firſt thing neceſſary. For as to the Pope's Infallibility, I cannot think that the good and wiſe God ſhould either have appointed any one Man, or any ſet number of Men, as an Infallible Judge, and Interpreter of his will, to whom we muſt attend and obey, reſigning up our judgment and reaſon, and yet never tell us where this Man or number of Men is to be found; whereas ſurely this ought to have been of all things the moſt plainly, and frequently urged in Scripture; It ought to have been as viſible there, as that *God is One*, or as that *Jeſus* is *Chriſt*. Nay indeed methinks Scripture ſhould have told us nothing elſe, but where to find this Infallible Judge, and how to obey him. For all other Precepts and Rules of Scripture, muſt certainly be ſome derogation to the Power and Authority of this Infallible Guide.

And ſeeing this Infallibility cannot be made out, nor ſhewn in whom it doth reſide (for even they of the *Roman* Communion cannot agree where to place it: and all other Chriſtians utterly diſown it.) How can it be a neceſſary Point in order to Salvation to ſubmit to the Biſhop of *Rome*, or receive, and practiſe whatever he tells us we ought to receive and practiſe? For he may be miſtaken, as well as other Men. And I think it is very evident, that unleſs it be on account of his Infallibility, we in *England* owe him no more obedience, or ſervice, than we owe to any other good and Chriſtian Biſhop: Nor do we owe him ſo much reſpect, as we owe to our own Biſhop; for it is certain that we belong not to his Temporal, nor to his Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction.

And till they of the Church of *Rome*, from their own Example, ſhew us which is this Infallible Judge, and what uſe he is of, by putting an end to their own Divi-

ſions, and Controverſies, I ſhall certainly conclude, that they do not believe themſelves when they ſay, He is ſomewhere among them. Or at leaſt, if he be among them, he had as good not have been there, for he is of no uſe or benefit to them; much leſs can we believe it neceſſary to Salvation to own his Authority and Infallibility. Particularly let them make the Council of *Trent* to be fully received in *France*, and its Authority own'd there (and yet if an Infallible Judge ever pretended to appear among them, it was in that Council which made a new Creed, and new Religion:) But we know the Authority of that Council is utterly diſown'd in *France*, and nothing approved of as decreed by that Council. Let them, by the help of this Infallibility, end, and decide all the great and dividing Queſtions among their own Members; Let them reſolve and ſatisfie the Quietiſts now at *Rome* it ſelf, Determine the Diſputes between, and Reconcile the Jeſuits and Janſeniſts; we ſhall not elſe think it is out of love to us, or to Truth, that they tell us of this Infallibity, but for ſome other, and bad Deſigns on us, at leaſt I cannot ſee how they can expect that we ſhould own and acknowledge it. For if they really had ſuch an excellent thing among them, I do believe that they love themſelves ſo well, that they would apply it to the Cure of their own miſerable Diſſentions and Diviſions; and they will never perſuade us they have it, till they firſt of all uſe it thus towards themſelves.

And if it be not on pretence of Infallibility, that they reckon it neceſſary for us to be in Communion with the Biſhop of *Rome*, I cannot ſee how they can on any other account plead it neceſſary that we ſhould be ſubject to him. For I cannot think it poſſible that God ſhould make obedience to any humane thing, to be the firſt thing neceſſary in order to Heaven, eſpecially a humane Authority diſtinct from that Regal Authority under which I was born, and to which I owe Subjection, according to both S. *Peter*'s and S. *Paul*'s Command; much leſs that all the World ſhould be ſubject to one Man, and much leſs yet that this ſhould be, and yet God Almighty never tell us in Scripture where this Univerſal Monarch ſhould reſide. And yet they may talk what they will, it is not our Believing

lieving agreeably to true Chriſtianity, and for the ſaving of our Souls, that they would have us ſubmit to them, and own their *Infallibility*; it is not out of love to Truth, or to us, that they at all deſire our Converſion, as they call it, but it is for the love of our Money, and that they may domineer the more over our Eſtates, and Purſes, as well as our Conſciences. And hence it is that the Converſion of *England* is at this day ſo little regarded and promoted at *Rome*. For the Pope and Cardinals are old Men, and they ſay, that we being very obſtinate, there is no hopes that any good ſhould be done with us in their days; and if ever we ſhould be Converted, we ſhould bring no Money to them, we ſhall not be fleeced in their times, and they are not much concern'd for thoſe that will come after them. They may ſpend Money on us, to ſend, and maintain Men to Convert us, but they ſhall receive no Money from us. Thus they argue, and talk freely at *Rome*. And this is one, if not the main reaſon, that the Pope and Cardinals are ſo backward, to preſs our Converſion, eſpecially when they conſider at the ſame time, that the Men chiefly imployed in our Converſion, are Jeſuites, of whom even the Pope, and all the wiſe *Italians*, are both afraid, and aſhamed. Nay indeed, they wonder at us, of all Men in the World, that we ſhould at all think of embracing that Religion, which they that know it beſt, and get moſt Money by, are weary of, and going to throw off; almoſt all the Learned and Ingenious *Romans*, that care for any Religion, being *Quietiſts*, and conſequently no Admirers of the exerciſe of Religion according to preſent Popery. Thus the Wiſe *Italians* think and argue; and yet ſurely if there be *Infallibility* in the *Romiſh* Church, it is among them, and they are neareſt to it. And if any here plead, (as ſome I know have the Impudence to do,) that there are no *Diviſions* at *Rome* concerning *Quietiſm*, they may as ſoon perſuade that they are all *Virtuous* there, that there is no *Vice*, or that the Pope neither is, nor never was there; and I will undertake to defend all this too as well as *Tranſubſtantiation*. And if there happen ſuch another Pope to ſucceed this Pope in his Enmity againſt the Jeſuits, I ſee not why the Jeſuits may not perſuade the World that the true

Pope is not at *Rome*, but at *Paris*, or where they pleaſe. For *Paris* is as often called the Seat of St. *Peter*, and the Infallible Chair, as *Rome* is called ſo in the New Teſtament; and I believe it is as evident from Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory that St. *Peter* ſate 25 years Biſhop in one City, as in the other.

And as thus I cannot believe either the Infallibility of the Biſhop of *Rome* to be true, or ſubjection to him to be neceſſary to Salvation: So nor can I think the other Additions that he hath made to the Creed, to be parts of true Chriſtianity, much leſs to be neceſſary to be believed.

All the Contradictions that a Man can reckon up, perhaps, may be as reconcileable, as the Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*. And the Chriſtian Religion being by our Saviour, and the Apoſtles, recommended to our *Reaſon*, it is not poſſible but they muſt give us leave to make uſe of our *Reaſon* in judging of the ſeveral parts of this Religion. For, tho' where we Contemplate on any thing that entrencheth on Infinity, we are ſenſible our Reaſon is at a loſs, and we ſubmit to Revelation without more ado (for ſo if we Contemplate but on the *Extenſion* of the material World, whether it be Infinite, or no; or on the *Diviſibility* of matter, whether it can be into Infinite parts or no; or of the *Ante* and *Poſt duration* of the World, or Time, whether it was poſſible for it to have a Beginning, or End, or no; whether there can be an Infinite Number, or no, *&c.*) In all theſe kinds of Queſtions, tho' only concerning Natural things, yet we muſt confeſs our Reaſon to be puzled; and ſo what concerns the Attributes, and Nature of God, if there be any thing above our Reaſon taught us in Scripture, it is not the fault of Religion, but of our own Minds, and their Incapacity, that we do not comprehend it, (it all concerns Infinity, which we are unable to comprehend, or treat of;) But that there ſhould be ſuch Difficulties, and Contradictions in our Apprehenſions of a thing ſo entirely liable to our Senſes, as a piece of Bread is, one would not ſuſpect.

Indeed if the Church of *Rome* had told us, there are an infinite number of parts of matter in that Bread, we might have yielded to them. But for them to tell us that there are

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an infinite number of Bodies of Men, and all ſix foot long, in a piece of Bread of an Inch long, and all this infinite number of Bodies in this one lump, to be but one Body whilſt it is altogether, and all theſe Millions of Bodies that are on Earth to be not different from, but the ſame with one another, and with that One Glorified Body that is in Heaven; That at the Conſecration that Body comes down from Heaven, tho' it ſtir not at all; That it is Eaten by every one that receives the Sacrament, and yet continues to be Eaten by thouſands of others ſtill; That it neither nouriſheth as fleſh, nor hath any property of Fleſh according to themſelves, for it may be eaten in *Lent*, that it is real fleſh, tho' no fleſh, appear, and that there is no Bread, tho' only Bread appear; that when it is mouldy, or eaten by Rats and Mice, that neither Bread nor Fleſh is mouldy, or eaten by theſe Rats and Mice: All theſe, and innumerable more Contradictions are contained in this Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*. Beſides that this Doctrine, as taught in the Church of *Rome*, is contrary alſo to Scripture, which calls it Bread when it is eaten, 1 Cor. 11. *Let a Man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat of that Bread*; and in many other places.

But now if after all it ſhould be true, that Chriſt ſhould be in the Sacrament, as the Papiſts imagine; yet our Reaſon and Senſes ſo fully informing us the contrary, and our Saviour having no where bid us lay aſide our Reaſon or Senſe in this caſe, but He himſelf even after his Reſurrection appealing to the Reaſon and Senſe of St. *Thomas* for the verity of his Fleſh and Bones, we may be ſure that he would excuſe our Unbelief when we have ſo many Arguments againſt it, and nothing for it, but one ſingle expreſſion, which is undoubtedly Figurative as to the Cup, for he calls it *Cup*, inſtead of *Wine* in the Cup; and we may juſtly think it is ſo Figurative as to the *Bread*, when he calls it his *Body*. For the Eaſtern Nations, and Eſpecially the *Jews*, very much uſe ſuch Figurative Expreſſions; and our Saviour elſewhere calls himſelf the *True Vine*, the *Way*, the *Door*, which no man certainly ever underſtood in a literal Senſe. But eſpecially the Church of *Rome* ſo ſtrictly requiring the higheſt Divine Honours to be paid

to that which appears under the form of Bread and Wine, We are infinitely the moſt ſafe in paying it no Divine Honours, becauſe we have all the reaſon in the World to believe, it is nothing but Bread and Wine. And if it ſhould be as the Papiſts ſuppoſe, we may be ſure Chriſt would excuſe us, if we Worſhip him, and Pray to him as in Heaven ſitting at the Right Hand of God, tho' we take no notice of him here, where, according to themſelves, he appears but at beſt *incognito*, and hath no where commanded to be Worſhipped as Corporally preſent there: And God declares himſelf a *jealous* God as to his Worſhip; and therefore if he ſhould not be there in Body, they cannot deny but they commit flat Idolatry. And yet the Worſhipping of the Hoſt, as they call it, is of all things the moſt ſtrictly enjoyn'd, and inſiſted on, as if there were no danger at all of giving God's Glory to another, and provoking his Jealouſie. And yet according to the Papiſts themſelves, the *Elevation of the Hoſt*, and the *Worſhipping of it* by the People, hath been but lately Ordained in the Church of *Rome* it ſelf; and it is not to this day Practiſed in all the Eaſtern Churches; and the appointing a Feaſt for it, called *the Feaſt of God*, and the Worſhipping it, when carried in Proceſſion, or to a ſick Perſon, is of later date.

For the ſame Reaſon alſo I am very ſhy of uſing any *Image* in Divine Worſhip; For I cannot but think that Images were forbidden the *Jews* in the Second Commandment, and are forbidden us ſtill. And tho' the Church of *Rome* pretends that they are Aſſiſtances to Devotion, I cannot but think them to be rather hindrances, and diſtractions. And that a Man muſt be very ſenſual, and immerſed in matter, whom an Image will aſſiſt in his Appehenſions of God, or make to be more devoutly affected towards him. I am ſure they are an inſufferable offence to both *Jews* and *Turks*, and make them ſo averſe to Chriſtianity, that there is no hopes of Converting them. And yet no Man can ſay that the Worſhip of them is at all neceſſary, and all muſt grant they may be intolerably abuſed, as we find by the Old Teſtament they were, and from the Practice of the Heathen, both of old, and ſtill. And tho' the *Learned Men* in the Church of *Rome* may have

have better Notions of things, yet it is to be feared that the *Common People* do perform the ſame Worſhip to them, that the Heathen did to their Images. And if the Image only puts People in mind of the Perſon; Why ſhould the Image of the Virgin *Mary* at *Loretto* be more eſteem'd than any other? For I cannot fancy it is more like the Virgin *Mary*, who certainly was no Blackamore. Therefore by their running thus to one Image, rather than another, they muſt neceſſarily think, that there is ſome Holineſs in the Images themſelves, ſome Divine Vertue reſident in them, which is the Notion, in which the Heathens looked on, and Worſhipped their Images: And God himſelf hath ſaid, He is a *Jealous God*, eſpecially concerning Images, in the Second Commandment, which the Church of *Rome* is ſo ſenſible of, that they ſuffer not their People to Read, or Learn that Commandment, leſt they ſhould boggle at the Worſhip of Images.

Nor do I think much better of the Prayers which they make, and the Worſhip they pay to Saints departed, though theſe are not dead and ſenſleſs, as the Images are. For the very Praying to them at all times, in all places, and on all occaſions, argues that they muſt own ſome kind of *Omniſcience* and *Omnipreſence* in the Saints. For elſe how can the Saints hear us, where-ever we are? And all Religious Prayer being a part of Divine Honour, we think it too much to be aſcribed to a Creature, eſpecially when they pray to a Saint, not only to *Pray for* them, but *to give* them all Bleſſings, Spiritual and Temporal, for Protection from all Enemies, Ghoſtly, and Bodily, from all Evils at Sea, and Land: By ſo doing they aſcribe a kind of *Omnipotency* to the Saint alſo.

And tho' they do grant, that the Saint gets theſe good things for them of God, yet they are beholden to the Saint, elſe they think God would not have given them. And therefore tho' they own God to be the Original Author, yet they look on the Saint, as the immediate Donor, to whom they are immediately and eſpecially obliged. And after all this, they cannot but grant, that there is no neceſſity of praying to a Saint. For they can as well, at the ſame time Pray to God himſelf, who, they are ſure, hears them, and can help them, and who will be ſo far from

taking it ill, that He expects to be Pray'd to by us, and is called in the Scripture, *the God that heareth Prayer.*

But tho' God is so willing to be pray'd to by us, yet still there are some Prayers which I cannot think that he is much pleased withall; And that is Prayers for the Dead, which are so constantly offered up, and make a considerable part of the Devotions of the Church of *Rome.* For whatever Instances are found in the Primitive Church of Prayers for the Dead, were only either Evidences of their Belief of the Souls living after Death, which they thought proper to inculcate, and by this means to Evidence in a Heathen World; or else were Arguments of their own abundant Charity, and of the Imperfect State as to Happiness, in which they supposed the best Men to be till the General Resurrection; but it is evident, they had no knowledge of those Purgatory Pains, which are now the only occasion of the Prayers for the Dead in the Church of *Rome.* And accordingly they pray'd only for the Best People, for such of whose Salvation and Happiness there was no doubt, as the Virgin *Mary*, and Apostles; which is directly contrary to the present Doctrine and practice of the Church of *Rome.*

And tho' the Ancients, on some mistaken Notions, concerning the State of the Soul, did sometimes thus Pray for the Souls of good Men, yet seldom or never for the Souls of bad Men. Nor did they make that ill use of it, that is now made in the *Roman* Communion. For now in the Church of *Rome*, nothing is so easily secured, as Eternal Salvation, the Absolution of a Priest being sufficient for that. Therefore all that any Man need fear, is only the Punishment of Purgatory; and to pray for their deliverance thence, is half the business of their surviving Friends, and the Purchase perhaps of half their Estates. But if the Justice of God would not pass by, or forgive this Temporal Punishment, as they call it, before the Person's Death, and whilst he might amend, and be made better by the use of the means of Grace, how can we think that God should pardon him now, seeing there is no hope of his growing better? I cannot indeed so much wonder that *the Church* now should be glad to have this Opinion prevail among the People; but I admire that *the People,*

People, or indeed any that love Truth, ſhould rely, or depend on it, eſpecially ſeeing there is not one word in Scripture to encourage this Opinion, nor one Inſtance of prayer for the Dead; not any ſuppoſition of any Fire in the other World, but that which *never ſhall be quenched*; nothing but vehement Exhortations to *work while it is called to day, before the Night of death comes, when no man can work*; altogether another kind of method of Salvation, than is now Taught and Practiſed in the Church of *Rome*.

I might alſo inſiſt on many other Articles, and ſhew them to be *Inovations*, or *Additions* to the Faith, as of the Seven *Sacraments*, *Traditions*, Sacrifice of the *Maſs*, *Communion in one kind*, *Indulgences*, aſcribing ſuch vertue to Inſtitutions of their own, viz. *a Monaſtick Life*, *Holy Water*, *Croſſing themſelves*, their Doctrine of *Merit*, and *Supererogation*, of the *Pope's power to depoſe Princes*, *abſolve Subjects from their Allegiance*, (which I perſuade my ſelf, St. *Peter* would never have pretended to) of the lawfulneſs of *breaking their Faith with Hereticks*; and eſpecially, ſeeing they of the Church of *Rome* inſiſt on theſe, as the very Foundation of Religion, and will promiſe you Salvation, if you do but own, and profeſs theſe, let your Life be what it will be, according to that ſaying of *Tertullian*, concerning the Hereticks of his time, *Nunquam facilius proficitur quàm in caſtris Rebellium, ubi ipſum eſſe illic promereri eſt.*

But of all the Points of Popery there have been ſo many, and ſo Excellent Diſcourſes of late written by the Clergy, eſpecially in and about the City of *London*, that I need ſay no more, but refer my *Reader* to them.

CHAP. VI.

Of Civil Converſation,

THough the World be one of the Enemies which I am warned of in Scripture, and in my Baptiſm I renounce and promiſe to fight againſt, and though the ill Cuſtoms and Examples in it are too often a Snare to many; yet ſtill I am Taught in the Church of *England*, that

I may lawfully, and ought to converſe in it. For as it hath difficulties and temptations to Vice, ſo it gives alſo occaſion to exerciſe our Vertues; and therefore is no more evil, or dangerous, than our life it ſelf here which is a ſtate of trial, in which it is expected that we muſt do good and ſuffer hardſhip, in order to an Eternal Reward. And I cannot think that the Wiſe and Good God would not only have ſent us into the World, but alſo have made ſo many Employments, neceſſary and uſeful in order to our ſubſiſtence here, if it had been a ſin to manage thoſe Imployments, or to converſe with thoſe that do. Therefore I reſt fully aſſured that whatever Imployment is neceſſary, or uſeful in the World, is alſo lawful; and whatever is lawful, may be lawfully managed by my ſelf, or any other good Chriſtian. St. *John* the Baptiſt, the Forerunner of our Saviour, when the Publicans and Soldiers came to ask him what they ſhould do, doth not bid them lay down their Imployments, as either unlawful, or unfit, or unſafe, but gives them good and uſeful Rules, fitted to their ſeveral Caſes, but ſuffers them ſtill to continue in their Imployments: And yet thoſe Two Imployments ſeem as much to expoſe Men to Temptations, and to have as much to be ſaid againſt them as any. And we find the Apoſtles, and particularly Saint *Paul* in his Epiſtles, to give advice to Perſons of all kind of Conditions, and to preſcribe Rules concerning the Carriage and Behaviour of *Husbands* and *Wives*, *Parents* and *Children*, *Maſters* and *Servants*, *Magiſtrates* and *People* in Church and State, and both *Superior* and *Inferior*; which is to me an undeniable Argument, that in every one of theſe Relations, one may live as becomes a good Chriſtian.

And particularly as to Government and Magiſtracy, I am ſo far from thinking it unlawful, that I eſteem it neceſſary, and look on it as one of the moſt Sacred things in the World; for it is of God's appointment. and on the maintaining of which, the good of Mankind doth much depend.

And of all kinds of Government I like Monarchy, it being a reſemblance of the higheſt, and the beſt fitted for preventing Factions and Diviſions, and for the more regular Adminiſtration of Affairs, and ſeems naturally to derive

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it ſelf from Paternal Authority, or the power of Fathers over their Children; every Father of a Family, or Patriarch of old time, as *Adam*, *Seth*, *Noah*, *Sem*, *Abram*, *Jacob*, being a kind of King over their Children and Grand-Children; and ſo the Name of Father is thought at length to have been changed into that of King, for ſo we find *Kings* in Scripture frequently called *Fathers*; And they are always ſuppoſed to have that ſame care and tenderneſs over their People, as a Father hath for his Children and Family; and accordingly may juſtly challenge the ſame kind of hearty love and ſervice, and obedience from them.

And eſpecially in this Country I hold my ſelf bound, as far as I can to ſupport and maintain the *Monarchy*, in all the *juſt* and *ancient Rights* of it: For it is the Form of Government that hath been always eſtabliſhed and in uſe here, and is in the frame of our Laws and Conſtitutions ſo conſtantly reſpected, that it is a dreadful danger, as well as ſin to endeavour any change or alteration of Government. And if there be any Right on Earth, ſurely Monarchy hath Right with us, and hath at leaſt as good a Title to all its Powers, Rights and Priviledges, as any of its Subjects can have to their Honours, Properties and Eſtates. And I think my ſelf bound to do what I can, to maintain this Monarchy in its true Line and Succeſſion; the Monarchy of *England* being always eſteemed as truly an Hereditary and Succeſſive a Monarchy as any in the World; the Crown deſcending from Fathers to Children, whether Males or Females, not liable to be Diſpoſed, Alienated, or Sold, nor depending on any Election, or Choice of the People; and according to this method our preſent King enjoys the Crown, who hath, as I believe, the trueſt and moſt ancient Right to his Crowns, that any King in the known Parts of the World hath: For tho' the Succeſſion hath had ſometimes interruptions, and the Crown hath been violently ſeized on, yet ſtill the Right to Succeſſion was then generally owned, and the Interruptions were afterwards cenſur'd as Uſurpations; and whatever Irregularities there were ſometimes for a while, yet at laſt the Stream did return into its true Channel, and the Monarchy became ſo Setled by the

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good Providence of God, that as far as Hiſtory can inform us, our preſent King is Heir both of the *Saxon*, *Norman* and *Scottiſh* Lines. And our Kings being both by the Laws of God, and alſo by the Laws of our Land, ſuppoſed to look on themſelves towards their Subjects, not as Maſters towards their Slaves, but as Parents towards their Children, and to deal with them accordingly: I take care therefore alſo to pay him the ſame kind of true filial Obedience, Service and Submiſſion, as to a Parent, to pray for him, and wiſh him well, to be tender of his Honour, and careful of his Good, neither to wrong him my ſelf, nor ſuffer others to wrong him, as far as is in my power, to look on him as one ſet over us by God for good, and to reſpect him Conſcientiouſly on this account: And this I look on as a better foundation for true Loyalty and Obedience, than *fear*. For that Prince that only deſigns to *terrifie* his Subjects and keep them in awe, hath but a very uncertain hold of his People.

And as thus Government is neceſſary in the World, and Monarchy is lawfully eſtabliſhed among us, ſo for a Man to have a ſhare of this Government, and to be ſubſervient to the Monarchy, is not only lawful, but for him to diſcharge it well, it is exceeding commendable; he thereby will purchaſe a bleſſing to himſelf from God, and be a publick bleſſing to the World. And I am not aſhamed of the meanneſs of my place and rank whatever it is; for in every Government or Body of men that live together, there muſt needs be a great variety of Employments, ſome higher, ſome lower, ſome more, ſome leſs honourable, yet the meaneſt, if honeſt, are both uſeful for the good of the whole, and may be lawfully managed by a Chriſtian. And tho' I will not thruſt my ſelf into another Man's Office and Buſineſs, that being the certain cauſe of diſorder and confuſion, nor am I very forward to ſolicit or ſue for any publick Employment, for I conſider the weight and moment of it, for which I muſt give an account both to God and the Publick, and it is poſſible that by my having this place, I may exclude another that will manage it better: yet when I am lawfully called or appointed to any place, I refuſe it not, knowing that ſome body muſt have all theſe places, and tho' I am not ſo ſure of my own *abili-*

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ties, yet I am as ſure of my own *integrity* and deſire to do good, as any can be; and I am ſenſible that *integrity* goes a great way towards the diſcharge of my truſt: but I do not by reaſon of trouble or charge avoid any Office even in my own Pariſh; for by every one of theſe I ſerve God, and my Neighbours, the Church and State, and alittle pains or money laid out in ſo good a Cauſe, is agreat gain. If the place that I have be honourable or beneficial, I look not ſo much at the profit or honour of it, as at the truſt repoſed in me, and the opportunity that I have by it of doing good. And to ſtir up my ſelf to a careful management of the truſt I have, I conſider that both God and Man will expect that whilſt I am in this place, I ſhould be more uſeful in the World than other men, or elſe my account will be ſad at the laſt day. And this conſideration will have another good effect on me, it will make me alſo more willing to leave or part with this place, tho' very beneficial; to be ſure, it will make me keep it no longer than I can with honour, and a ſafe and good Conſcience.

And by my doing my Duty honeſtly and diſcreetly, tho' but in an inferior place, perhaps I may ſtop a gap, by which miſchief might come to the Publick; I may encourage my Inferiours, ſhame my Superiours, if they are remiſs, and give a good example to all; and this is of manifold advantage to the Publick.

And ſo if I have any Vote or Intereſt for the choice of a Member in Parliament, or any Publick Miniſter or Officer, or the diſpoſal of any Employment in which the Publick is concern'd, I do nothing for favour or friendſhip, I regard not any kind of Intereſt or Obligation of my own; for I always think that regard is firſt to be had to the Publick, and the good of it: and therefore I employ my Pains and Intereſt, for ſuch as, I verily believe, are fitteſt for it in themſelves, and will do moſt good to the Publick, both as to Church and State. For I hold it highly unreaſonable that any kind of publick Office or Employment, ſhould be beſtowed as a reward for former Services or kindneſſes to my ſelf, for by ſuch kind of tranſactions, I plainly ſell the Publick to pay my own private debts and obligations.

Next to the publick, I reckon my ſelf eſpecially concerned for my own Family; that being ſo particularly com-

committed to my charge, that I only am accountable for them.

My Wife I not only take care of, but ſhew all reſpect and kindneſs to her, as to my beſt and deareſt Friend in the World; for ſo by my marrying her, I took and own'd her; and in the Church before God and the Congregation, I promiſed I would ſo carry my ſelf towards her, and I can never expect a Bleſſing of God, if I break a Vow ſo ſolemnly made before God, and in ſo great a Caſe. And to put my ſelf the more effectually in mind of this, I often read over the Office of Matrimony, to ſtir up my ſelf to a ſtrict obſervance of my Vow there, and to prevent my varying from it.

If I have a Father or a Mother alive, I not only pay them all poſſible reſpect and obſervance, but give them all kind of aid and ſupport that I am able, on every occaſion, as being both commanded ſo to do by God, and alſo in gratitude for what they have done for me; and further, as an engagement on my own Children to ſhew the ſame duty to their Mother and me, when we ſhall be old.

To my Children I ſhew the ſame tenderneſs, as to my Wife, and give them, as I am able, ſuch Education and Inſtruction, as may keep them ſtrictly Vertuous and Religious, and make them uſeful to the World, as well as dutiful, and comforts to my Wife and my ſelf. And I take care ſo to bring them up, and place them, in order to their future ſubſiſtence, that they may have ſome honeſt and induſtrious way of employing their time, and maintaining themſelves: Eſpecial regard being had to ſuch a way of living, as, I think, will be beſt for their Souls good. For I am not at all ſollicitous to leave them a great Eſtate, but only ſuch a Portion as ſhall be an aſſiſtance and encouragement to their Vertue, to their Diligence, and Induſtry; but not a Maintenance for their Vanity, and an incentive to their Luxury; for that may be a Snare, rather than a Bleſſing to them.

If I have Brothers and Siſters, though living far diſtant from me, yet I have a very particular concern for them, as being naturally parts of the ſame Family with my ſelf, and are therefore in an eſpecial manner the objects of my Love,

Love, and of my care, and though I have no direct authority over them, yet I muſt never be wanting in good advice and admonition to them; and yet to all People of a good temper, advice and counſel will go as far as commands or threatnings, eſpecially if it be given with that tenderneſs and affection, which is due to perſons ſo near related to me.

My Servants I treat with ſuch gentleneſs and kindneſs, as may make them thankful to God, chearful in their condition, as well as willingly ſerviceable and faithful to me. For I look on them as Brethren, both by nature, and the Goſpel, and that we are all Servants alike to the great Lord of all, and there is no reſpect of Perſons with him. And he having committed theſe Servants to my truſt, I not only take care for their Food and comfortable Subſiſtence here, but eſpecially for their Inſtruction, and the good of their Souls hereafter. And therefore I not only frequently in diſcourſe teach them their duty to God, and exhort them to the practice of it, but alſo I take notice how they come to the Publick Service, eſpecially on Sundays, and Family-prayers every day, and always allot them ſome time every day, at leaſt a quarter of an hour, Morning and Evening, for their private Devotions, which I teach them to uſe out of the *Whole Duty of Man*, or Dr. *Patrick*'s *Devotions*; and I reckon it a great fault in Maſters or Miſtreſſes, ſo to hurry, and perpetually to employ their Servants, as not to allow them any time for the Service of God in private. But then this time that I thus allow them for their private Devotion, I make as ſure as I can that they thus ſpend it, and not in Idleneſs, or talk with one another.

To all my Family in general, I make my ſelf as eaſie as I can, being not difficult to be pleaſed, and ready to forgive any ſlight neglect or fault: for I am ſenſible of my own infirmities and faults, eſpecially againſt God, on the conſideration of which only, I think my ſelf bound to be mild towards others offending me; their offences againſt me, being againſt fewer and leſſer obligations than mine are againſt God, and I praying to God ſo often every day only to *forgive me my treſpaſſes, as I forgive them that treſpaſs againſt me.*

As

As I contract not *Friendſhip*, or extraordinary familiarity with any bad Man, or ill affected to the Church or State, both for the ſake of my own reputation, and my own ſafety (an intimate acquaintance with a bad Man, reflecting always on his Companions, and Vice being always very Infectious:) ſo when I do chuſe a Friend, and profeſs any kindneſs extraordinary, I am not only real and ſincere in my Friendſhip without deſign or tricks, but make it a part of my ſtudy and buſineſs, that my Friend may be the better for me. If I ſee any thing fit for him to do, I put him in mind of it, and adviſe him friendly; if I ſee him do any thing amiſs, I admoniſh him alſo, and as kindly reprove him, which is no other than what I would have him do to me: If I can aſſiſt him in any buſineſs, I do it willingly and readily, and am not ſparing of my trouble or ordinary charge for him; I reckoning it as one of the worſt properties of Men, who ſometimes ſo love their own eaſe, that they will not ſo much as ſtir out of their Seat, to do another the greateſt kindneſs. And though I am thus ready to help and aſſiſt my Friend, yet I take care always to perform more than I promiſe, or put him in hopes of, or to promiſe leſs than I deſign to perform; for I conſider the way of the World and temper of Men, that their hopes and expectations do generally out-run their reaſons; what they have but the leaſt encouragement given to hope for, they in their thoughts make themſelves ſure of; and therefore by my doing more than I ſay for my Friend, or promiſing leſs than I intend, I both provide againſt diſappointment which may poſſibly happen, keep him more at eaſe and reſt, and yet ſhew my friendſhip to him as much. And the carriage which I have thus expreſſed, I uſe towards my Friends, or ſuch as I chooſe out of the World, for a more intimate familiarity; I uſe it alſo towars my *Kinsfolk* and *Relations*, whom God hath as it were recommended to my Friendſhip and Acquaintance, by making them ſo by nature allied to me.

Towards all my Neighbours, that live in the ſame Pariſh or Town with me, of what rank or quality ſoever they are, and indeed to all that are not only Chriſtians in general, but Members of the ſame Church and

and Nation with my ſelf, I take care to diſcharge all the Offices of *Juſtice*, *Charity*, and *Kindneſs*, that the Goſpel requires of one Man to another. And accordingly I not only do them no wrong, by taking from them by ſtealth or oppreſſion, by cheating or over-reaching, by ſlander or backbiting; but I am ſtrict to give them whatever by any kind of right belongs to them. Hence I make as much Conſcience to pay my debts, or what I juſtly owe to another, as I do, not to rob him, or ſteal from him. As to Charity, I content not my ſelf with giving only what I am rated, and ſo forced to pay to the Poor; but give alſo conſiderably as a free-will Offering of my own, according as I find any more than ordinary preſſing occaſion, (and ſuch will ſeldom be wanting long to a Man that converſeth in the World, and hath a mind to do good) and although the meaſure of Charity is not defined in Scripture, yet I conſider that the *Jews* were obliged to give near a fifth part of their yearly income to the Prieſts and Levites, and the Poor: And I am ſure that the general fault of Men, is, that they give too little, and therefore I will go a ſtep further than ordinary; and ſcarcely any Man gives enough, that doth only give what is perfectly ſuperfluous to him, what he doth not at all feel; and therefore I can ſcarcely think I give as much as I ought, unleſs I do at leaſt ſomewhat abridge my ſelf by my Charity. By ſuch rules as theſe I govern my Chraity, and by ſuch Motives and Conſiderations, I ſtir up my ſelf to it.

And though only a few perhaps need my *Charity*, yet I may and do exerciſe *Kindneſs* towards all, the Apoſtle commanding us not only to be *juſt* and *charitable*, but to be *pitiful* and *courteous*; to be far from the temper and Practice of ſome, who love to provoke and inflame; for I eſteem it my duty, as far as I can, to be civil and obliging to all, according to the Apoſtle's advice, for every Man to *pleaſe his* Brother to *edification*: For this not only renders Mens lives more happy in themſelves, but alſo conduceth much to the peace of the World: And when Men are in a good temper, they are better prepared, and more eaſily won over to any good, and not ſo liable to any Temptations of the Devil.

To

To all Men, and on all occaſions, I practiſe ſincerity, and hate deceit; and tho' I know it not neceſſary for me to tell every Man all that I know or think; yet I will never tell any Man contrary to what I know, or think: For I reckon that falſeneſs and deceitfulneſs is the laſt thing to be pardon'd by God or man; and they that deceive others, it is juſt with God that they be deceived themſelves, and it ſeldom fails, but that God takes ſuch People in their own craftineſs.

Tho' I know that our Law doth allow Suits for ſmall things, and that if a Man will he may be troubleſome to his Neighbours on many occaſions which will daily happen, and which are perhaps juſt provocations, at leaſt according to the cuſtom of the World; yet I reckon my ſelf bound to bear with many things, and not to take every advantage againſt my Neighbour, which the Law may bear me out in: For I am ſenſible that Humane Laws do allow of many things that are not very becoming of a Chriſtian. Nay, even if I be defamed and ſpoken ill of (tho' nothing is dearer to a Man than his reputation) if I know my ſelf innocent, I will take all prudent and Chriſtian ways to clear my ſelf; yet I will not let every paſſionate Expreſſion againſt me, be the occaſion of quarrel, but rather pity the infirmities of humane nature, than highly reſent ſuch miſunderſtandings and offences that are taken, tho' unjuſtly, at me. And I am ſure that by my thus bearing patiently an unjuſt aſperſion, I ſhall not only pleaſe God, but alſo win even on my Enemies, who aſſuredly will ſee their Error, and ſo according to *Rom.* 12. *I ſhall overcome evil with good.*

What *Eſtate* I have, I always reckon that it is not given me only for my own uſe, and to enjoy my ſelf with, but eſpecially to do good on private and publick occaſions. And therefore as on this conſideration, I muſt not ſpend it all on my ſelf, ſo alſo in *prudence* (tho' I abhor Covetouſneſs as much as Prodigality, yet) I reckon I ought to live always below my income, tho' not niggardly, and ſo I make ſome proviſion and allowance for extraordinary caſes and charges, that will frequently happen. And in order to my full content of mind, and to prevent my uſing any unjuſt or unfit ways of enriching

riching my ſelf; in the firſt place, I make it my buſineſs ſo to regulate my paſſions as not to *deſire*, and my way of living in the World, as not to *want* a great Eſtate or large Income: And then I have reaſon to hope, that if God ſhould give me more, I ſhould be both more moderate in the uſe of it, and imploy it better than elſe I ſhould do. And however ſcanty my fortune, or mean my ſtation in this World is, (if I am not ſinfully acceſſory to the bringing of my ſelf into this condition) I am not at all aſhamed of it; for poverty is no fault or occaſion of ſhame; but I reckon I may both be in the favour of God, and alſo benefit the World, if I diſcharge it honeſtly and diſcreetly. But the more I receive from God, I always reflect how much more thankful to God, better in my ſelf, and uſeful in the World, ought I to be than other Men: and whether my Eſtate increaſe or decreaſe, or be more or leſs, (unleſs by my own fault,) I have always this conſideration before my Eyes, that the leſs I have, the leſs I muſt certainly give an account of, and this I am ſure is the trueſt ground of contentment in every condition.

As to the imployment of my *time*, I reckon it a great part of Prudence, and much conducing to the happineſs of life, ſo to accuſtom my ſelf, that I may always have ſomewhat to do, that I may have ſome way of ſpending my time by my ſelf, with uſefulneſs and ſatisfaction.

And I not being obliged and forced to work all day long, as Day-labourers, and many Farmers and Artificers are, but having ſome time to ſpare, from the exerciſe of Devotion in publick or private, the buſineſs of my calling, and the charitable offices that I have mentioned already, I take care to employ it as well and uſefully as I can for others and my ſelf, Time being a Talent which God hath intruſted us with, and for the ſpending of which we muſt one day be called to a ſtrict account. And beſides this Religious conſideration, I reckon it is one of the moſt miſerable and unhappy conditions in the World, for a Man to live ſo, as that his time is a burden to him; and yet it is the want of having ſome uſeful and handſome way of employing his time, that makes a Gentleman ſometimes the moſt miſerable creature in the World, and

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the only uſeleſs part of God's Creation. If the time of year, or weather, or his health be ſuch that he cannot Hawk or Hunt, he is undone; and therefore is almoſt forc'd to the pitiful ſhift of Drinking, to paſs away time, tho' to the loſs of his Time, the *abuſe of his Reaſon*, and the prejudice of his *Health*, and Eſtate. Now that I may never be at ſuch a ſad loſs, as that my Time ſhould hang on my hands, but that I may be able to ſpend a rainy day at home Soberly and to Satisfaction; And tho' I make no part of Learning my Trade or Buſineſs; yet I inure my ſelf to ſome kind of ſtudy, as being ſenſible that all Knowledge and Learning is the improving of a Man's mind, is a very proper imployment for a man's time, and will generally be of real uſe and advantage in Life.

And firſt, a Knowledge of our *Religion*, both as Chriſtian in general, and as it ſtands diſtinguiſhed from other kinds of Chriſtian Religion in the World, is very neceſſary. For ſeeing the Salvation of my Soul depends on it, ſurely I may well allow it ſome ſhare of my time and ſtudy. And true Religion being the Will of God, it every way deſerves my thought and Contemplation; and by my underſtanding my own Religion well, I ſhall, by the bleſſing of God, keep my ſelf more ſteadily from being ſeduced into any ill opinion or practice.

After Religion, the *Laws* of our own Country ought to be known and ſtudied by me, and every Man. For I ſhall often have occaſion for a knowledge in the Laws. If I be a Juſtice of Peace, or if I be a High-Conſtable, Petty-Conſtable, or in any Office, Civil or Military; or if I be but empannel'd on a Jury, a competent Knowledge in the Law is neceſſary; that I may underſtand how far my Power goes, what my Place or Office allows, or requires, what is expected of me, and what not; and this cannot be throughly known, without reading and ſtudying the Law. Beſides, by a little knowledge of the Laws I ſhall be able perhaps ſometimes to make up and compoſe Differences among my Neighbours, prevent Suits at Law, and conſequently the ruin of Families, and breach of Friendſhip.

Beſides theſe parts of Learning which are ſo neceſſary,

I exerciſe my ſelf in others, which I eſteem proper Diverſions, commendable Accompliſhments, and which have their uſes alſo in Life: Such as are *Hiſtory* and *Chronology*, both of the World in general, and alſo of our own and neighbour Nations in particular; together with the *Deſcription* and *Geography* of them. For ſome knowledge of this kind is neceſſary even in order to Diſcourſe, and for the underſtanding but the common News and Relations of Tranſactions in the World. There is no part of thoſe Sciences which they call *Mathematical*, but is both uſeful and pleaſant, improving and fining a Man's Reaſon, and ſerving to many occaſions of Life; ſuch as are *Geometry*, *Arithmetick*, *Aſtronomy*, *Navigation*, *Surveying*, *Architecture*, *Fortification*, *Art-Military*, all *Natural* and *Experimental Philoſophy*. And beſides theſe, by a Man's underſtanding the *Anatomy* of his own Body, by his having ſome knowledge of *Herbs*, ſome skill in the general Grounds of *Phyſick*; he may be ſometimes helpful to his poor Neighbour when a Phyſician is not near, and may be able at leaſt to paſs a better Judgment on his own, or his Childrens and Families Diſtempers.

Theſe and other very uſeful parts of Learning there are ſufficient to take up a Man's Life; and there are good Books of all theſe Sciences in the *Engliſh* Tongue, and eaſie to be had, and which I can either learn by my ſelf, or elſe with the direction and aſſiſtance of the Parſon of my Pariſh, or ſome other learned Neighbour. And I cannot but reckon that Man very ſtupid, that hath ſuch a Field of Knowledge before him, and yet knows not how to ſpend his time: And tho' I ſhould perhaps have no great edge to any of theſe parts of Learning at firſt, yet let me but try, them a while, and I ſhall certainly find them the greateſt diverſion, and the moſt pleaſant way of paſſing time that can be; and ſuch a connexion is there among them, that if I do but mind any one Science or part of Learning with an appetite, I ſhall inſenſibly be drawn on to others, and find them neceſſary. And all theſe Sciences have both the *general* uſes, to inform our Ignorance, and prevent our being deceived and impoſed on, to refine and improve our Reaſon, to ſatisfie and inlarge our Minds, and fit us for Diſcourſe

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and Converſation; and alſo their *particular* uſes as apply'd to the ſeveral caſes of Life to which they relate. And my having theſe ſo innocent and commendable ways of ſpending my time, will beſides have many advantages; it will keep my Mind buſie and employ'd, and even make me contented; I ſhall not have that uneaſineſs of Mind, that an idle Man hath, nor fall into thoſe Temptations to which Idleneſs expoſeth Men. I ſhall be ſome way uſeful to my Neighbour and the World, adorn and cultivate my Mind, and thereby ſet my ſelf ſo much the farther above the Beaſts, avoid many of thoſe Errors and Abſurdities, to which want of Knowledge in theſe Sciences often betrays Men; I ſhall hereby be more fitted for any kind of Publick Employment, Civil or Military: And I think it may go for a Rule, That there is no part of good Learning, but a Man will ſometime have occaſion for, and find uſeful, let his Employment or Quality be whatever it will.

But beſides this way of Employing of time in Reading and Study, it is confeſſed, that it will be neceſſary alſo, for a Man to be ſometimes in *Company*, when he viſits or is viſited, or is obliged to meet other Men on any Publick or Private Affair or Buſineſs. And tho' theſe meetings do too often become a Snare, and draw Men into exceſs of Wine, Paſſion, *&c.* which therefore as we are Chriſtians, and have Souls to be ſaved, we muſt watch againſt: Yet it cannot be denied, but that as being in Company, and converſing with others, is neceſſary in the World, ſo it hath great and manifold Advantages; it ſoftens Mens Tempers, and makes them pliable, it reduces the Rules of Religion and Prudence into Act, it cures the Mind of that ſowerneſs or conceitedneſs, to which a very retired and Monkiſh Perſon is too much expoſed; Acquaintance and Friendſhip is kept up by it, both Private and Publick Affairs are concerted, and much good done many ways. But then I take care what I can, to prevent or avoid the Evils, into which keeping Company often draws Men. And therefore if I hear a raſh Word ſpoken, though againſt my ſelf, I do not preſently blow it up into a Quarrel, but prudently paſs it by, as ſuppoſing it is not the ſetled thoughts of his Mind that ſpake it; I examine my ſelf,

ſelf to what occaſion I have given for ſuch ſpeeches; as if I find I have done any thing amiſs, I modeſtly own it; and if I have wronged him, I am not aſhamed to acknowledge it, and beg his Pardon: But if I find I am innocent, I doubt not but that he will in a ſhort time ſee his Error, and be aſhamed of himſelf, and therefore he need not be ſeverely rebuked by me. I believe not eaſily ill ſtories told of others, nor love to hear them, nor incourage the tellers of them; what Mens company I do not like, I neither publickly affront them, nor complain of them, but either bear it patiently (if it be ſuch a company, as I am obliged to be in) and ſo it will teach and inure me to get a conqueſt over my paſſions, or elſe I wholly abſtain from it, but even this I do without making a noiſe, or being taken notice of, as avoiding ſuch a Man's company.

If I hear ſwearing or profaneneſs, obſcenity or backbiting, I take the liberty ſome way or other to ſhew my diſlike of it; if before my Superiours, with a religious modeſty; if among my equals, with freedom; if among my Inferiours with ſome kind of Authority. For all profane and obſcene diſcourſe, and reflecting on others, is really an affront and wrong to every Man; for every Man hath a right in *Religion* and *good Manners*, and ought to ſee them vindicated. And as a Man ſhould not ſuffer his Friend or Relation to be abuſed and ſpoken ill of unjuſtly, without ſome way appearing in his defence: So ought every Man to endeavour to vindicate Religion and good manners, according to the nature of the place in which he is, and the company with which he doth converſe.

On this ground alſo I make it part of my buſineſs, when I am in company, as often as I have opportunity, to prevent miſunderſtandings, and to compoſe differences among Men; and whatever I hear that may provoke Men againſt one another, I never divulge, but endeavour by all means to ſuppreſs, and ſo hope for the bleſſing of a Peace-maker, *Matt.* 5. I always make the beſt of, and put the moſt candid interpretation that I can, on what is done or ſaid, hereby to keep People at Peace, and to incourage good actions in the World. And the more ſilently and ſecretly I do this, or any thing of the like na-

true, I eſteem it is always the beſt; for the leſs it is obſerved, it will always do the more good, and will alſo be as ſure, or ſurer, of a full reward.

And though I confeſs I ſeldom play at any game, yet when a Man is in Company, to pleaſe a Friend, and to avoid drinking, and ſpeaking ill of their Neighbours, or the Publick, I cannot but allow of playing at ſome innocent Game or Recreation; but ſtill whatever lawful Recreation I uſe, or Game I play at, I obſerve ſuch Rules as theſe; *Firſt*, Never to let it take up either the moſt, or the beſt, but only the refuſe of my time, and the intervals of buſineſs and ſeriouſneſs. 2. Never to ſpend on Recreations, or to venter the loſing ſo much, but what I can well afford, and may lawfully lay out on my own diverſion, without ſtreightning my Eſtate, or abridging my Charity (for my Charity muſt not be the leſs, but the more liberal, for what I ſpend in Recreations: For if I can afford to *throw away* ſo much, it is always ſuppoſed that I can *give* more.) 3. Never to ſuffer my ſelf to be put in paſſion, or out of humour at my loſſes, or diſappointments in theſe Diverſions, and therefore never to deſign gain or profit, but health and recreation in them. And then I think there is no lawful Diverſion, but may be ſafely uſed ſome times, if I uſe it not too often, ſo as to make it my buſineſs and imployment; and if I always obſerve a *Decorum*, to do nothing, though lawful in it ſelf, at an improper time, or which is not fit for my age, place, and ſtation: For that may be fit for another, that is not fit for me; and I am ſo far from the common cuſtom of the World, of cenſuring others for what they commit themſelves, that I can very patiently bear with many things in another, which I will not take the liberty to do my ſelf; for I can lawfully and commendably abridge my own liberty, but I cannot ſo well impoſe on, or charge, or cenſure others: There may be more excuſes made for others than for me; and therefore in all doubtful caſes, I chooſe rather to confine my ſelf, than other Men.

And by my thus managing my ſelf in theſe little and common caſes, I ſhall not only keep my Conſcience clear, and live inoffenſively before God and Men, but

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ſhall alſo contribute to the keeping up Peace, and Friendſhip, and good Correſpondence among Men, Members of the ſame Church and Nation: For I direct all my actions, as far as I can, to the publick good, and I always wiſh that the publick may flouriſh rather than my ſelf, and wiſh that another may have this or that place or employment, rather than my ſelf, if he will manage it better, and be more uſeful to the publick. And from this Principle alſo, I will even venture or part with all, to do real ſervice to the publick, and am neither covetous nor timerous, wherever the good of the publick is concerned. And however in a matter of a *Private* concernment, I may yield up my own rights to pleaſe others; yet in what the good of the *publick*, either as to Church or State is concerned in, I will by no means recede from my juſt rights out of any kind of fear or complaiſance; for in ſo doing I ſhould rob Poſterity, I ſhould rob not only my ſelf, but all that I love moſt, and that depend on me, and betray my truſt, and lay a foundation for a publick miſchief and ruin; and to be ſure God will require ſuch injuſtice ſeverely at my hands.

CHAP. VII.

An earneſt Perſuaſive to continue in the Church of England.

SUch is my Belief, and ſuch is my Practice and Carriage according to the Doctrine and Commands of the Church of *England*; and therefore I think a Man but little underſtands Chriſtianity, or hath not any peaceable inclinations, that finds fault with it, and that doth on any account ſeparate from it.

For firſt, it is *the Church*, which is by all kind of Lawful Authority *Settled* and *Eſtabliſhed* in our Nations. And therefore if there be any obedience due to any Commands of Governours in Church or State, Communion with the Church *eſtabliſhed* here, is a duty; unleſs a Man can ſhew any expreſs Commands of God to the contrary, which a Man will be ſo far from finding in Scripture,

that he will find much there to oblige him to continue in it. For where ever Government in general is eſtabliſhed, and Obedience to Governours enjoyned, it ought to be reckoned as ſpoken of our Government or Governours Eccleſiaſtical and Civil, as well as of any other in the World.

But we are not only obliged to communicate with the Church, becauſe it is Eſtabliſhed among us, but becauſe we ſee it hath all right to be Eſtabliſhed, as being ſo agreeable to Scripture, the Practice of all Antiquity, eſpecially the firſt and pureſt, is ſo well fitted to anſwer the very end and deſign of a Church, and purſues thoſe ends ſo fully, as well as that it hath had a conſtant immemorial preſcription among us. For at the Reformation, we did not begin anew to frame and form our Church, but kept the Eſſentials of a Church which we found eſtabliſhed, and only corrected thoſe Errors, and reformed thoſe Abuſes which had by degrees and length of time, or eſpecially by the prevalency of the Biſhop of *Rome* and his Agents, crept in among us. For as we were not Converted at firſt from *Rome*, ſo nor did we at firſt receive ſuch a Chriſtianity as is now taught and practiſed at *Rome*, but ſuch as is now eſtabliſhed in our Church. Nay we can ſhew that we were a ſetled Church before they came among us. They indeed brought a great many bad things among us, which we at laſt threw out; and in our Reformation we departed from them only in what they had departed from the true Church of Chriſt, and from themſelves in the firſt Ages, as our Canons ſpeak.

So that our Reformation was neither a *Schiſm*, nor doth it countenance any *Schiſmaticks*, or excuſe any Separation from our ſelves. For we can ſhew that all that are born in theſe Countries, are more under the Eccleſiaſtical Government of theſe Countreys, and more bound to Communicate with us, than we are under the Biſhop of *Rome*, or bound to Communicate with him: And they can never ſhew the like reaſons and grounds of their ſeparating, or diſſenting from us in Doctrine or Diſcipline, as we can for our Believing and Acting otherwiſe than the Biſhop of *Rome* doth. So that if any People, Born and

Baptiſed

Baptized in any Church under Heaven, have a duty incumbent on them, and ought to continue in that Church, I am ſure we in *England* have at leaſt ſo much as they have, or more. So that either there is no neceſſity of continuing in any Church in which Men are Born and Baptized, or there is a neceſſity for us to continue in our Church.

Indeed we confeſs our caſe is on many accounts very hard, by reaſon of the ſeveral Adverſaries that we have on either hand; but yet even this ſeems ſomewhat to ſpeak for us, our Church being in this, like Virtue it ſelf; which conſiſts in a mean, between two extreams; or as King *Charles* the Martyr expreſſed it, like our Bleſſed Saviour who was Crucified between two Thieves. For ſuch, and ſo different are our Adverſaries, that whatever we do, we are ſure to be blam'd and accuſed by one ſide or other. But as Mr. *Hooker*, Dr. *Falkner*, and others, have abundantly made out the *Lawfulneſs* of all our Inſtitutions, ſo he that conſiders what oppoſition is made againſt us on every ſide, and what proviſion we muſt make againſt Objections, tho' of different and contrary natures, will ſee the *prudence*, and even *neceſſity* of whatever is enjoyned among us.

So *v. gr.* it is confeſſed, That by our retaining the *Epiſcopal Government* in our Church we anger ſome; and yet if we had omitted, or rejected it, we had more injured our ſelves, and our cauſe, and more juſtly offended others.

By our inſiſting ſo ſtrictly on our *Ordinations*, we are liable to complaints from ſome; and yet if we did neglect and not inſiſt on them, we ſhould ſubject our ſelves to juſter accuſations. Our having a *Liturgy*, diſpleaſeth ſome; but if we had not had a *Liturgy*, we ſhould have anger'd more, and injured Religion. If we enjoyn any thing, if it be but a *rite or ceremony* in the Service of of God, ſome blame us, and yet if we ſhould enjoyn nothing, but leave all at liberty to do what they would, nothing could follow but confuſion. The Ceremony of the *Sign of the Croſs*, ſome blame us for uſing it ſo much, others blame us for uſing it no more.

So that all Men muſt needs ſee that it is impoſſible for

us to live without offence. Our wiſeſt courſe therefore ſurely muſt be, next to conſulting what is neceſſary for Religion, for us ſo to order things as to diſpleaſe leaſt, or ſeeing we cannot pleaſe all, yet to pleaſe ſome; eſpecially thoſe who ſeem to have more of reaſon on their ſide. And this is the Rule which I think we have exactly followed. For there is nothing in our Conſtitution, againſt which exceptions are taken by any, but what we have, out of Chriſtian Charity and Condeſcenſion, retained or enjoyn'd, as far as we can, and as Chriſtianity allows, to ſatisfie and pleaſe ſome others of our ſcrupulous Brethren. And I know no one thing, tho' the moſt plauſibly argued againſt by ſome, but would have been liable to greater objections if we had not ordered it ſo. And therefore, I verily believe there is no Man that conſiders our caſe, puts himſelf in our place, and weigheth impartially Truth according to Scripture and Antiquity, and that would withal take care to provide againſt, and to avoid all the objections that this or that party of Men makes againſt us, but will ſee a plain neceſſity for our enjoyning and acting in every caſe as we do.

I am not therefore ſtartled to ſee ſome on all ſides to oppoſe us, for I am ſenſible that if we acted otherwiſe than we do, we ſhould render our ſelves liable to greater oppoſition and contradiction on one hand or other. So for inſtance, if we uſed and inſiſted on more Ceremonies, our other Diſſenters would think they had more juſt reaſon to complain: If we uſed not ſo many, the Church of *Rome* would have greater advantage againſt us. Beſides I conſider, that nothing can be enjoyn'd, much leſs can a whole frame of things be laid, but that ſome People may take offence at it, and objections may be raiſed againſt it. Therefore the Rule that we go by in our Church is this, *Firſt*, We take care that nothing neceſſary be omitted, nor any thing untrue be taught, or unlawful be enjoyned, but that the whole frame of things may be ſo contrived, as ſhall conduce moſt to the advancement of True Devotion, and the rational and decent Service of God, Governing our ſelves all along by the Scripture, expounded eſpecially by ancient practice; for we would not have it ſaid that we are ſuch a number of Men as never were

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in the World before, but that we are ſuch, and ſo conſtituted as we are confident the primitive Martyrs and holy Men of old, would have joyned in Communion with, we living by ſuch kind of rules as they themſelves practiſed. And *then* in the next place we conſult what will diſpleaſe others leaſt, or be leaſt liable to miſtakes and objections, for we comply with either ſide as far as we can without forfeiting Truth, or laying our ſelves open to a juſt reproof and accuſation. And accordingly it is obſervable that ſome things we have abrogated, that were formerly practiſed by us, others we have changed and altered and ſomething we have recalled and revived, which was formerly omitted, and all this as we deſigned to gain the more, and do the more good, tho' ſo uncharitable have our Adverſaries been, as even to charge this on us as a fault, and put a bad interpretation on this our ſo Chriſtian Condeſcenſion.

On ſeveral other ſuch accounts do we juſtly think our Church very hardly uſed. It is generally very affecting to complain, and people naturally pity them that ſuffer, whatever the occaſion is, eſpecially it is popular to complain of what is eſtabliſhed; it goes with many for a ſign of Courage and of Conſcience, for a Man to find fault with the Publick. Now the Church of *England* being by Law Eſtabliſhed, it can never want Enemies for that very reaſon. If it be the Eſtabliſhed Religion, it muſt have Laws for its ſence and ſecurity. Theſe Laws muſt have ſome kind of Penalties to inforce them, or elſe they ſignifie nothing. If theſe Penalties are inflicted, it affords matter of complaint and clamour; if they are not inflicted, yet they ſerve as well for Men to complain of the ſeverity of the Laws againſt them, and ſo they are great gainers by theſe Laws: For it is popular to plead Perſecution, as well as Advantageous not to ſuffer by it. Nay, our Adverſaries gain Reputation againſt us ſometimes by their ſuffering, though the moſt juſtly. For if they ſuffer for Sedition, or Treaſon againſt the State, They will give out, that they ſuffer *for their* own Religion, and *by our* Religion; and this is often ſufficient to create pity towards themſelves, and incenſe Men againſt the Church.

I mention all this, that Men may ſee the common grounds of clamour againſt the Church, and may not be ſurpriſed at it, nor tranſported againſt the Church, by reaſon of it. For you ſee, whilſt it is the eſtabliſhed Religion (which I hope in God it will for ever be) it will and muſt be expoſed to ſuch kind of difficulties and objections, which every Man muſt learn to conſider, and endeavour to prepare and fortifie himſelf and others againſt. For indeed it hath no other objections lying againſt it, than will lie againſt the beſt frame of things in the World, if eſtabliſhed and made the National Religion. Of the beſt thing in the World, Men may ſay, *it doth not pleaſe them, they do not like it*; but that ought not to go for an objection, unleſs they ſhew their reaſons of diſlike; and I think that all the reaſons of diſlike which have been urged hitherto, our Clergy have ſo fully anſwered, as to be ſufficient to take away all ſcruples out of the mind of rational and unprejudiced Men. Some other Objections have long lain on us, eſpecially that of our inclinableneſs to Popery, and that we wanted only an opportunity to ſhew our ſelves, and to bring it in. A few years ago it was both in Sermons and printed Pamphlets daily thus propheſied concerning us; but I hope that all Men now ſee how little truth there is in this, and that the Clergy of *England* are no Friends to Popery. And yet if we conſult the beginnings of Separation among us, we ſhall find, that the fear of our Clergies deſigning to bring in Popery, was the principal occaſion and motive to Separation from us. And indeed whilſt thoſe fears laſted, there was ſome little ground for what they did, if their fears were real, (though ſtill they ought to have examined our Principles and not to have judged ſo ſeverely of us by way of Prophecy.) But now I muſt needs ſay, I think they are bound in Conſcience to return to us, the very Foundation of their diſſenting and ſeparation being taken away, or elſe they ſeem unexcuſable before God. For ſurely no conviction can be greater than this, which hath now been given of the Church of *England*'s being no favourer of Popery. And I hope in God, that ſeeing the main objection is removed, they will have more of the peaceable Chriſtian in them, than to ſtudy for new Arguments to juſtifie their Separation. And

And on occaſion of this Objection that lay ſo long againſt us, I muſt for God's ſake beg of all Men to take heed, eſpecially of this kind of Prophetical Objections, that we *will be*, or *we would be ſo or ſo*, of *this or that Party*, if we had an opportunity; for this is an Objection that is eaſily made, and yet is ſcarcely poſſible to be anſwered, and therefore is on all accounts the moſt unchriſtian and worſt kind of ſlanders. Indeed in reference to *Popery*, it hath pleaſed God in his wiſdom and goodneſs to give us a full occaſion and opportunity to ſhew and clear our ſelves, and to evidence the falſeneſs of that accuſation. But now if we ſhould be accuſed of being ſecretly *Jews*, *Socinians*, *Mahometans*, or the like, what poſſibility is there of our ſufficiently clearing our ſelves, unleſs they would that God ſhould bring us into the ſame kind of Tryals as to thoſe Religions. But I ſee not what occaſion there is for Men to be put to *Propheſie* concerning us, The Doctrine of the Church of *England* is as legible, and as eaſily underſtood as that of any other Church in the World. Every Man ſees what Opinions the Clergy are of, for they ſubſcribe and aſſent to the Book of *Articles* and *Homilies*, and to the Book of *Common-Prayer*; many have alſo ſome regard to the Articles of *Anno* 1640. They take the Oaths of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, and the *Teſt*, renouncing *Tranſubſtantiation*, and other bad Doctrines and Practices of Popery, and give all the Security that one Man can give another, of their reality and ſincerity as to what they profeſs. And now for Men to ſay, notwithſtanding all this, that they are ſecretly, and in their hearts otherwiſe affected, and to Propheſie that they will, when they have an opportunity, introduce ſome bad Doctrines or Practices, contrary to what they now profeſs is moſt highly contrary to Chriſtian Charity, is an Uſurping the place and prerogative of God in judging of Men's thoughts; nay more, it is a condemning, and executing Men before-hand, for what they will do, or at leaſt for what others think they will do afterwards: Which ſurely is the moſt ſevere and unjuſt way of proceeding in the World.

Let us then be conſtant and perſevering in the Profeſſion of Religion, and the Doctrines taught in This Church,

Church, and in the exerciſe of Devotions uſed and encouraged in it. This is the way, by the bleſſing and aſſiſtance of God, to keep our ſelves from falling into any evil Opinion and Practice; whilſt we continue in it we are ſure we are in God's way, and ſo may hope for his bleſſing. On a ſtrict ſurvey of the State of Religion in the World, I am ſure I can find no particular Church, or number of Chriſtians, but may have more ſaid againſt it, than can be ſaid againſt the Church of *England*. We give to the Word of God its Supream and Infallible Authority and Preeminence, and we give alſo to the Commands, and to the Inſtitutions, and Practices of good and holy Men their weight and reſpect and deference alſo. In the Worſhip and ſervice of God, we keep the mean between Superſtition or diſtracting gaudineſs, and too great indecency and ſlovenlineſs; between burdenſomneſs and multitude of Ceremonies, and a want of becoming carriage and reverence before God. All things that are neceſſary or uſeful, we find here enjoyned, taught, and practiſed, and this without the mixture of any thing that is dangerous and hurtful. We are confident and ſure of our own being in the right, but yet dare not condemn abſolutely all that differ from us, as Reprobates; which though it is no excuſe or ſecurity for them that are in a bad way, yet is a ſign of our Charitable Chriſtian Temper. We received our Religion at firſt, as pure as any other Church; at length we found we had varied from the Truth, and then we reformed our ſelves as to *Authority*, as regularly as could be; nothing being done among us by multitude or with tumult, but by the Supream Authority of our Governours in Church and State, the King, Parliament, and Convocation. And the *rule and method* by which we went and guided our ſelves in our Reformation, was as good as was poſſible, Scripture, the Word of God exactly and nicely examined, and eſpecially as it is expounded by the Primitive Church: and nothing was done, or left undone, but what was agreeable to both. And we ſtill deſire to be tried and judged by the Scripture, ſo Interpreted by the Ancients. For if we in any thing now differ from the Ancients, it is only in ſuch ſmall things as they

they did differ in from one another without breach of Unity, or in such things as it is in the power of every National Church to appoint or alter, in reference to its own particular cases, and circumstances. And so very well assured am I of this, that all I would desire of the Enemies of our Church, is, that they would read the Ancient Fathers, or first Christian Writers, especially in the first Ages of Persecution, and then desire them to judge according to the Rules by which the ancient Church proceeded, whether they do not in their Conscience think, that those good and holy Men, if they had lived now, would have maintained Communion with us, and rejected Communion with them, and I dare be bound to stand to their own Verdict and Judgment. And as this is a matter of great Comfort and Satisfaction to us, so methinks to others, it must be but a melancholy reflection for them to find themselves such a kind of Christians as never were, nor would have been born with in the World before. And as we were thus by good *Authority*, and by a *good Rule* model'd at first, so I thank God I think I can truly say, that we have in a good measure carried our selves answerably to our excellent Religion. Perhaps History cannot give us an instance of so many Men acting so honestly, prudently, and uniformly, against all Enemies on every side and in the most difficult Cases, as the Members of our Church have done in this late conjuncture; they have had no consideration of their own Interest or Safety in comparison of their duty. When our Clergy oppose *Rome*, we are sure they do it purely for Conscience; for it would be vastly more for their Temporal Interest, Power and Authority, to bring in Popery. Whatever discouragements they have found, they still Preach up, and persuade Loyalty to the *King*; and by the Doctrine of Passive Obedience to Temporal Authority, keep People from Rebellion, notwithstanding they have so often been jeered and abused with it: But yet out of modesty, seldom insist on the obedience that is due to the *Church* and Ecclesiastical Authority, tho' there is as much obedience due to her, as even to the Church of *Rome* from [illegible] Members. And we may be sure that God will vindicate

vindicate and require it as much, as if it were more imperiouſly inſiſted on. For Duty is not the leſs, but the more due, the greater the mildneſs, the forbearance, and the kindneſs is of them, to whom it ought to be paid. As St. *Paul* deſerved never the leſs reſpect and obſervance, though he did not uſe his Authority, nor take ſo much on him, as he might have done, as an Apoſtle of Chriſt; ſo truly a Chriſtian and apoſtolical Carriage, and conduct in all theſe reſpects, cannot go without a moſt ſignal bleſſing.

And how poſſible ſoever it is for Salvation to be had in other ways, yet we are much ſurer and ſafer here, than we can be in departing from it. This is the way that God expects we ſhould walk in, he having not only in his abundant Mercy placed us here, but alſo by all kind of Arguments recommended it to our Reaſon and Judgment. How unpardonable therefore muſt it be to leave this Church, how unjuſt to betray it, and not to maintain it, by all the lawful means that we are able, how accountable to God and Man ſhall he be, that occaſions, contrives, or yields to the ruine of it.

But by perſevering conſtantly in the Doctrines taught, and the devotions practiſed in this Church, we ſhall pleaſe God, adorn our Reli..ion, eſtabliſh the Church, and get a great and laſting Bleſſing to our ſelves, *which God of his infinite mercy grant, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*

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